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Glen A. Pierce

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evangelical

VISITOR

November 1991



*All creatures of our
God and King,
lift up your voice
and with us sing,
Alleluia!
Alleluia!*

*—St. Francis of Assisi,
translated by William H. Draper*

No blackout on blessings:

Psalm 100 gives guidelines for Thanksgiving

by David Faust

Thunder rumbled and rain smacked against the window as I labored in my office late one evening. I hoped to get some work done despite the storm, but my plans were curtailed when the power went off. Later, I learned that a tree branch had struck a major electric line. But at the time, all I knew for sure was that my normal routine had been rudely interrupted.

The lights in my office flickered and went out. My electric typewriter jerked to a halt. My clock stopped ticking. My radio sat in silence. Yes, even my electric pencil sharpener was rendered unresponsive! It was too dark to make a phone call. In spite of all the modern gadgets surrounding me, there was little I could do except give up and go home.

Neighborhoods looked strange and dark as I drove along. Cars inched tentatively through intersections where traffic lights hung unblinking and unhelpful. Passing one darkened house after another, I chuckled at the realization that nowhere in this community was anyone watching television, playing a computer game, using a hair dryer, or cooking with a microwave oven. One

minor storm had dealt a technical knockout to all our technological toys.

The blackout lasted only about thirty minutes. But it was long enough to remind my neighbors and

things by his powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3), so that "in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17).

During the past year, the Lord has imposed no cutbacks on his care.

There have been no gaps in his grace, no lapses in his love. Thanksgiving is the only proper response, and Psalm 100 provides four simple guidelines for expressing our thanks to God.

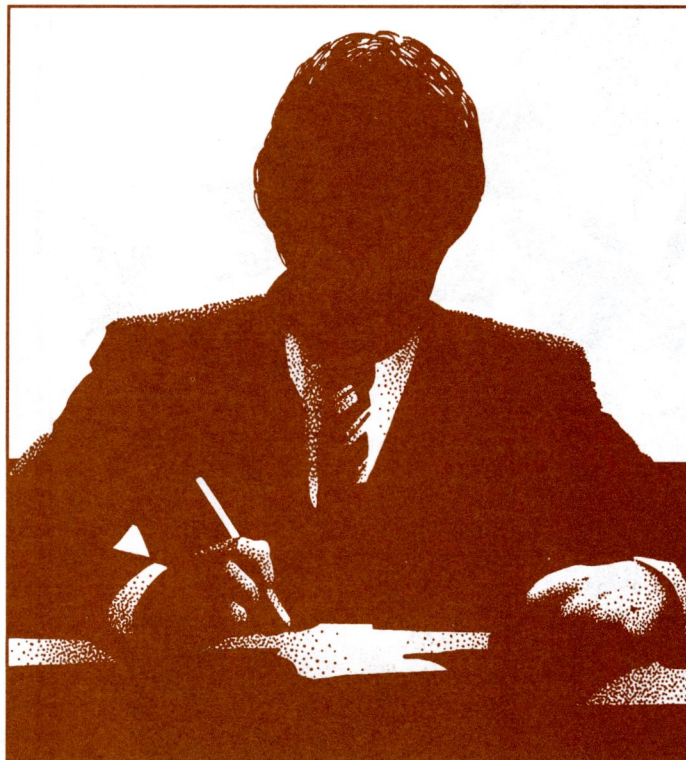
Gladly

First, we should express our gratitude *gladly*. "Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs" (Psalm 100:1-2).

My grandmother was an excellent gardener. She especially loved bright colored flowers. On summer days, a kaleidoscope of color surrounded her farmhouse: sweet peas, petunias, marigolds, sunflowers, roses. One day

Grandma announced she was going to "plant some glads." Of course, she was simply abbreviating the name of a flower called "gladiolus," but I liked the sound of that phrase, "Plant some glads!"

God has planted some glads in our lives this year. *Creation* brings gladness: from aardvarks to zebras, from asters to zinnias, from sandy, sunbaked beaches to forests dappled with autumn gold, God's handiwork



me that we depend on an outside power source, without which all our clever human creations seem feeble and useless indeed.

Scripture offers comforting assurance that God has not imposed a blackout on blessings. Continually, he "gives all men life and breath and everything else" (Acts 17:25). He gives "every good and perfect gift" we enjoy (James 1:17). Moment by moment, Christ is "sustaining all

David Faust is a member of the faculty at Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio.

demonstrates his wisdom, power, and love. *People* bring gladness: the laughter of little children, the wise counsel of the elderly, the steady companionship of friends and family and fellow believers who laugh, cry, work, and pray with us. God's *presence* brings gladness: faithful even in times of hardship and discouragement, God never forsakes his people (Hebrews 13:5). What a privilege to "come before him," into his presence, with joyful songs!

Humbly

Second, we should express our gratitude *humbly*. Several years ago, my church secretary placed above the copy machine in her office a little sign which said, "There are two great facts of human enlightenment: (1) There is a God, and (2) You are not him!"

Psalm 100:3 says almost the same thing: "Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture." We depend on God, just as little children look to their parents, or as sheep look to their shepherd. When sin disrupts this proper Creator-creature relationship, men foolishly cease to glorify God or give thanks to him (Romans 1:21-25).

Humility spares us from self-congratulatory arrogance, from wallowing in materialistic ease while we glory in our own accomplishments. The prideful man says, "Praise me for all I've got to show!" The humble man says, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" God warned the Israelites that full stomachs, fine homes, and financial wealth can produce proud, ungrateful hearts (Deuteronomy 8:6-18). Solomon wisely counsels, "Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4).

Personally

Third, we should express our gratitude *personally*. Psalm 100 calls God's people to worship both congregationally and individually. The people of Israel were not simply to stand outside the temple, allowing others to worship in their behalf.

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God's blessings call for individual action and personal response. Psalm 100:4 challenges each person to "enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise."

Grateful people sometimes find creative, personal, even extravagant ways to express their appreciation. I know some other dear folks who show their gratitude more quietly, out of the public eye. A retired gentleman spends his Saturdays working in a soup kitchen; a teenage boy pays weekly visits to a nursing home; a businesswoman gives anonymous cash gifts to help the poor—their ways of saying thanks for God's blessings. Members of a church give

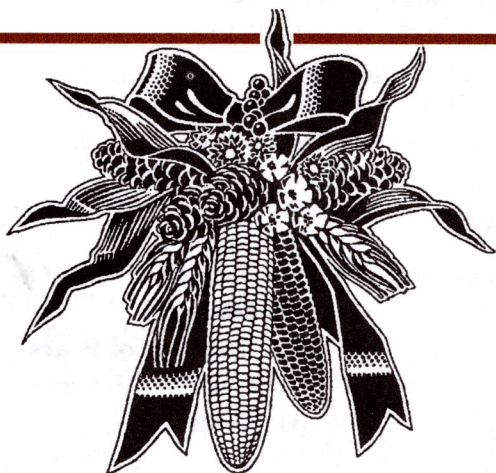
up a few hours of their own Thanksgiving holiday every year in order to provide a special meal for the poor or the lonely. They have found a way to make Thanksgiving personal—a time for sharing instead of self-indulgence.

Constantly

Most important, we should express our gratitude *constantly*. Thanksgiving must not be relegated to a one-day national festival; it must become the daily expression of a believer's heart. With tongue in cheek, someone suggested we set aside one day each year as "Gripesgiving Day." That way, we could do all our com-

plaining at once, and reserve the other 364 days of the year for giving thanks; instead of the other way around! Why should our praises go on forever? Why should every generation learn and practice an attitude of gratitude? "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Psalm 100:5).

Consistent gratitude is appropriate for all who worship our consistent God. David offered praise and thanks, whether he was in the joyous celebration of public assemblies (1 Chronicles 29:10-13) or in the lonely isolation of a cave (Psalm 57:9-11). The Lord Jesus gave thanks before



A Litany of Praise

by Faye Nyce

1st person Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good.
His mercy endures forever.

2nd person Just as he forgave the children of Israel
many times, so he often forgives me.

3rd person Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost
being, praise his holy name.

4th person How can I so easily forget to praise him?
Why do I have to search for reasons to
thank him? Without him I would not have
my next breath. Without him there would
be no tomorrow—nor even today!

All ***Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has
done marvelous things.***

1st person I praise and thank him for strength and
health; for his dependability—that day fol-
lows night; that he knew just how far to put
the sun from the earth; for the perfection of
the universe.

5th person Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord. Let
us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
For the Lord is the great God, the great
King above all gods.

6th person I come to you, Lord, admitting that many
times other things come before you in my
life. I do not always leave room for you to
be that great King above all gods. Yet I
must acknowledge that you truly are the
rock of my salvation. In you, O Lord, I
have taken refuge.

2nd & 5th person God, you are my refuge and
strength, always present whether in trouble
or jubilation. I need not fear, though there
are wars, earthquakes, floods, storms of all
kinds, or illness.

All ***Yet I am human—these things do fright-
en me. They shake my security.***

3rd person But we can be thankful—we know "the
Lord Almighty is with us; the God of
Jacob is our fortress."

4th person Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders

Faye Nyce lives in Grantham, Pa., and attends the Slate Hill Mennonite Church in Shiremanstown. A number of years ago she worked in the College Advancement Office of Messiah College.

meals (Luke 24:30), before miracles (John 6:11; 11:41), and even before the cross (Matthew 26:26-27).

Before Paul told the Thessalonians to "give thanks in all circumstances," he twice affirmed that he himself continually thanked God for them (1 Thessalonians 1:2; 2:13; 5:18). God's grace begets gratitude. Realistic but hopeful, suffering hardship but claiming victory, the faithful can find reasons for gratitude in any situation (Colossians 3:15-17). Thanksgiving rings through the annals of sacred history and echoes from the courts of heaven (Revelation 4:9-11; 7:12; 11:17).

When I was a young boy, my par-

ents insisted I take piano lessons. I complied grudgingly; and my grouchy attitude added further disharmony to the sour notes produced by my fingers! But one day, my grandparents asked me to play a song for them. I finished the tune as quickly as I could. Relieved that the ordeal was over, I almost missed my grandmother's kind words, "Why, that was very nice, David!" (a most generous, grandparent-like appraisal of my piano-playing).

Without saying a word in response, I slid from the piano bench and headed for the door; but before I could leave, Grandpa caught me by the arm and pulled me toward him. Looking

me straight in the eye, that old gentleman taught me a simple lesson I will never forget. "Son," he said, "someone just gave you a *compliment*. You should have said *thank you!*"

He was right. Gracious words and gracious deeds require a grateful response.

God gives more than we deserve, more than we could ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). Even when we have been careless, God has cared. Even when we have taken him for granted, he has granted mercies uncountable.

There has been no blackout on blessings this year. We should say *thank you*. ■

6th person You have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

Yet I want to declare to all who hear me that the God of Heaven is my Lord. He is merciful to me; he has redeemed me by sending his son; I can look forward to a home in heaven.

I declare my thankfulness for my church family. Though none of us is perfect, we are traveling the road together, upholding each other in crises and rejoicing with one another in times of blessing.

I declare my thankfulness for my mother and father—they show me love and patience in so many ways. They have supplied my earthly needs.

I declare my thankfulness for my grandparents, aunts and uncles. The strength of our shared relationship is like a firm pillar to me.

I declare my thankfulness for my community—thankful that I can sleep at night without fear of bombs dropping in our town, without fear of enemies breaking down the front door, without fear of any kind of disturbance.

I declare my thankfulness for enough to eat. Though we may complain about rising prices, our cupboards are never bare. We know where our next meal is coming from.

I declare my thankfulness that I can read.

It is a gift to be able to expand my mind by reading what others have written, and learning about other people in other places and times.

I declare my thankfulness for my friends and what they have contributed to my life.

I declare my thankfulness that people all through the ages were faithful in passing on the good news of Jesus Christ, some even risking their lives to preserve the Word of God.

Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever!

I declare my thankfulness for the beauty of the natural world:

...the song of the robin,

...the flight of a butterfly,

...the bountiful harvest,

...the majesty of the mountains,

...the shimmering red leaves of the maple tree,

...the brilliance of a full moon,

...the gleaming of the stars,

...the splash of the waves at the seashore,

...the golden fields of grain.

When I stop to count your good works, O God, they are more than can be numbered. I am filled with awe!

Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever!

Cooperating

in

concert

by Jerel L. Book

Both Thanksgiving and Christmas are occasions when we tend to think a bit more about giving than we might at other times. We also reflect more about budgets and evaluate personal money matters toward the end of a year. As we approach the end of this year and give some thought to the challenge being offered regarding Cooperative Ministries—someone has offered to match, up to \$5,000, every dollar that every congregation gives over their goal (\$5,000 per congregation)—let's ask God to show us his way.

The other day Fran and I went to Reading, Pa., to do some shopping at several of the many outlet stores, and just to spend the day together. It was relaxing, yet at one point when I became weary it was great to find a bench and settle down to wait. While I was waiting there, the Lord revealed part of his way to me. (I boldly say this because I really believe the Lord can speak in very simple ways.)

Jerel Book pastors the Mt. Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church near Mount Joy, Pa.

A toddler, just a year old, was coming down the long hall, dragging a large tote bag. Her mother was attempting to help, but the child was resisting all help and smiling as she swung the bag from side to side and pulled it along. It was nearly impossible for the child to keep the bag off the floor—the load was apparently not light.

As they continued down the hallway, it seemed immediately that a lesson should be drawn from this. In my home congregation and in the Brethren in Christ Church as a whole, we plan to “carry loads” that benefit the people of the world through our ministries. Any load eventually becomes a tiresome burden when we carry it all alone. As adults and youth we have learned the great value of “bearing one another's burdens” and supporting each other. We know that many hands make the work lighter.

Let us encourage one another—even more—to cooperate in concert. Our willingness to work together, our willingness to obey the Lord, our willingness to lend a cooperative hand makes a great difference. In a

day when so much need abounds, supporting our church (locally and generally) becomes a wonderful way to minister to our Lord.

God loves cheerful givers. I believe God loves to see cheerful giving to the general boards and agencies of the church. When we pull together it lends encouragement to this. All through the Bible—Old and New Testament—we see examples and teaching as to the fitness of those who love God committing their lives to him. And of course, giving generously is God-anointed—not the normal human proclivity.

As I watched this little girl toddle on her way, she switched the bag to her left hand and waved a smiling good-bye to several shoppers. She seemed so happy. But what would happen, one wonders, if she had to carry the burden all the way home all by herself?

When we carry a load or a challenge in concert with others, the blessing of God is realized within the bond of fellowship where joy abounds. ■

I was facing one of the most traumatic occasions I experienced as superintendent of the Brethren in Christ Mission in India. A very serious and seemingly unresolvable problem had emerged at one of the mission stations. A significant part of the resolution was to discover a signed document. It was not in the safe nor any other normal place of protection. Apparently it was lost.

Finally, I decided the missionaries must set aside a specific day to ask God to work a miracle. When the appointed day arrived, imagine my surprise to hear a knock at my door at 5:30 a.m. A trusted servant had taken the early morning train to Banmankhi. With great excitement he thrust toward me the "lost" document enabling us to take appropriate steps to resolve the problem. There was great rejoicing as we recalled God's promise, "Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). While God does not always respond in such dramatic or desired ways (Hebrews 11:35-40), repeated experiences and God's promises have taught us the absolute necessity of casting ourselves on the mercies of God.

Fasting and praying are integral to the church's realization of receiving God's best for his people. From 1900 to 1990 the Christian church in Korea grew from 0 to 30 percent of the population. A primary force in bringing about this change was prayer and fasting. Paul Cho, pastor of the world's largest church, describes this in his many articles and books. *Beyond Numbers* is essentially a story of God working through fasting and prayer, even in times of severe recession and great uncertainty.

The Scriptures provide numerous examples of God at work when people, in utter desperation, sought his face: Moses, the people of Ninevah, Ezra, Daniel, Jesus, and the early church. Jesus modeled fasting and prayer from the beginning of his ministry (the temptation in the wilderness) to the conclusion (the garden of Gethsemane).

The Brethren in Christ, along with other charitable groups, have been

Calling the church to prayer

by Harvey R. Sider

facing the tremendous pressures of the powers of darkness, materialism, and the recent recession. These are forces outside our control. Thus it is appropriate for the Brethren in Christ to use the month of November for "the work to which [God] has called" us (Acts 13:2). As we face the superhuman task of evangelism and discipleship, only God's Holy Spirit can energize us to win people to Christ. To be effective we must be empowered to serve and lead. God must help us release adequate personnel and financial resources for all our ministries to be fulfilled. In such an awesome challenge, prayer and fasting are key to glorious victory.

When a person interacts with God, several things happen. One becomes more keenly alert to the Almighty's bountiful resources to accomplish

anything he asks us to do. Love for God and others increases and love for self becomes less dominant, thus releasing a person to reach out to others in witnessing, freeing from crass materialism, and enabling one to give beyond his or her ability (2 Cor. 8:1-5). Communion with and dependence upon God may even lead me to answer my own prayer. God provides as we seek him through prayer and fasting.

Four areas of focus deserve our special attention during this month of prayer and fasting.

1. *We need constant renewal.* In both the physical and spiritual realms, the second law of thermodynamics constantly takes its toll. Everything degenerates with time, unless it is energized and renewed. Even the sun, we are told, is on the wane and, given sufficient time, will be as cold as an iceberg. Christians struggle against the tendency to "cool off." Prayer and fasting are essential to keep us "hot," on fire for God—in short, *revived*. Revival comes as we are prepared to pay the appropriate price, one part of which is a diligent seeking after God.

2. *We need effectiveness.* How easy it is to "spin our wheels"! Yet, from factory workers to professionals, the demand is for effectiveness. To be ineffective decreases productivity and

Four areas of focus deserve our special attention during this month of prayer and fasting.

ultimately results in the demise of an enterprise or ministry. In the church, our primary concern is not success but effectiveness. To be effective in evangelism and discipleship, and to meet the needs of people, it is essential to know and follow God's desires. Prayer and fasting are key elements in discerning how and where our energies should be engaged to serve Christ and the church.

3. *We need the Spirit's empowerment.* God normally works through people. What a sense of assurance to know that for effective service he has provided abundant empowerment for men and women of all ages! To be effective we must be empowered (Acts 1:8; Zech. 4:6) by the Spirit of God. The world operates out of the principles of military might, material power and human gifts, but God works through empowering people by his Spirit. We need to become "empty channels, full of blessing" as through prayer and fasting we let God empower his people, the church.

4. *We need to share resources.* Adequate resources often seem to be

a major stumbling block in kingdom building. True revival stimulates the same response that occurred in the Corinthian church when people began releasing their resources with generosity, after they first gave themselves (2 Cor. 8:5). I will never forget the comment of an Indian Christian leader who said, "When God's people begin to tithe, even in spite of our poverty, we will have more than enough resources to do all that God has called us to do." If that is true in India, how much truer in North America where many people should be giving 20, 30, 40 or 50 percent of their income (proportionately—2 Cor. 8:12). Prayer and fasting, leaning on God, these will help to free us from the captivity of the things of life until more than enough funds are available for all our ministries.

For the Brethren in Christ to take seriously the call to prayer and fasting, we must be focused. There are some specific responses you and I can make. Begin with this short list. Will you commit yourself to:

—Significantly increase the time

you presently spend in prayer and fasting during the month of November;

—pray and fast for personal and congregational renewal;

—each day bring to God one of the General Conference ministries as identified in the prayer calendar for this month;

—list the names of the general church leaders, bishops, executive directors and heads of institutions, and then pray for the energizing and empowerment of each of these persons;

—give of additional financial resources to enable all program ministries to be fulfilled.

Through prayer and fasting, followed by obedience, we will experience tremendous "showers of blessing" that God is waiting to pour out upon us. ■

Harvey R. Sider is Moderator of the Brethren in Christ Church. He and his wife Erma live in Fort Erie, Ontario.

Why don't we witness?

by Jill Briscoe

Years ago I was praying with one of my children at bedtime, and I asked him if he had any problems we should pray about. He couldn't think of any, though I could think of a number! Rather unwisely, I pressed the

point and asked, "Don't you have any problems at school?"

"No," he replied firmly.

"Don't the kids give you a hard time because you're a Christian?"

Again the answer was no.

Thinking back to my own traumatic school days, I said, "But kids always give you a hard time if you let them know you're a Christian."

His reply was frank beyond belief: "All the more reason you don't let them know!" With that, quite happily, he turned over to sleep.

With the refreshing candor of the very young, he had put into words the practical reasons why many Christians don't witness. They don't want to take the consequences. In all fairness to my son, I must explain that

he came to see things differently and went on to be used by God in numerous lives at school.

If you lack concern for those who don't know Christ, try the following:

1. Find out whether selfishness is controlling your actions so much that the Holy Spirit can't work in you. Recognize this as wrong, confess it, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you his concern for those who need the Lord.

2. Check your theology, especially the parts relating to each person's condition before God. Is your behavior consistent with your belief? If not, ask God to help you have the courage to be consistent.

3. List all the hang-ups you have about witnessing. Pray about each one and begin to see them in the light of what God has told you to do.

4. Continue to do these things—because if you don't you'll find other concerns taking the place of this one. ■

Excerpted from What It Means to Be a Christian by Stuart and Jill Briscoe, published by David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Ill.

Generic or prophetic?

by Douglas Kelchner

Where is our denomination heading? I am sure that I am like many of you who wish we knew the answer to such a key question. Instead, we know there are more questions than there are simple answers. Maybe all I can do in this article is surface some of the more critical questions that need to be asked and hopefully addressed.

Denominationally, transition is a word with which we are familiar. When we study our history we learn of the periods of transition through which we have come. I think we are currently in a critical transition time. For the past 40 years we have been influenced by evangelicalism and correspondingly less influenced by our historic roots. The evangelical media is increasingly shaping the theology of the people in our pews and the clergy behind our pulpits. Then currently, we see the focus of our denomination being sharply turned toward a united vision of growth.

The Board of Administration has now officially set the number one general church priority. It is "every pastor/congregation develop a specific five-year plan for evangelism. . . ." The stated purpose is to reach the projected growth goals that have been set. Now, while we should all agree

with the biblical priority of evangelism, there are honest questions that need to be asked as the mentality of the church growth movement continues to spread across our denomination.

Will growth require our being more centric or generic in the evangelical community? Will this necessitate a lessening of the prophetic role our smaller denomination has in the larger body of Christ? Is our relative smallness the result of, or the necessary price tag to having such a prophetic role?

What do I mean by being prophetic rather than generic? God has given us the role of preserving certain truths

that are not central to other, larger denominations. By our holding them as important and proclaiming them, we keep those truths before the thinking of the larger body of Christ. This is one key part of the heritage of being Anabaptist. We are one of the few bodies that has kept alive two-kingdom theology, which is based on many of the admittedly hard sayings of Jesus. Our teaching has not always been popular because it has been biblically demanding.

I feel I can raise these questions without apology for two reasons. First, I believe in evangelism and church growth. I am not against growth and am blessed to be the pastor of a growing church. Secondly, I came into this denomination because of its historic faith, not in spite of it, and I do not want to see it lost. While in my past denominational setting, I had these words placed just above my office door: "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything." I finally decided I needed to stand for what I believed and joined myself to the historic faith of the Brethren in Christ. Our distinctives give us a reason to be and keep us from falling for just anything.

I am concerned about this time of transition to which I have referred. I converse with laity and pastors alike who see many of the historic beliefs as only a millstone to the growth of the church. As one example, our

Will growth
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Douglas Kelchner is senior pastor of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church.

Anabaptist peace testimony is often seen as just extra baggage that we would be better off without. This means we would grow faster because we will offend fewer people.

I often wonder why one would want to become or remain a pastor in a denomination whose distinctive beliefs they were unable to commit to. In becoming Brethren in Christ I have not quit thinking. I still desire to have my thinking stretched. On the other hand, I did not come to be part of redefining the historic faith or with a desire to see that faith ignored or reshaped into a more generic evangelicalism.

Also, are we caught up in the consumer mentality that is affecting so much of the evangelical church world today? All the key reports tell us that our current generation is less likely to accept denominational structure and doctrine. People want us to meet their "felt needs." Will we run headlong to accommodate what people feel? Will we trim away from our beliefs whatever might not feel good so that we can accomplish growth?

Meanwhile, the same reports are telling us that professing Christians do not know the basic teachings of their faith and do not live any differently than non-Christians. It seems to me that our real emphasis could well be placed on not becoming generic in our faith. In the recent book *We Have This Ministry*, John Yeatts puts it best when he calls us to "concentration on 'Being the Church' in order to 'Expand the Church.' " What a profound insight to these transitional times.

So, I am a pastor with lots of questions, questions that are critical to my ministry because I joined this denomination in order to "be" Brethren in Christ, not a generic evangelical, and because I believe God has given us the prophetic role of proclaiming and living two-kingdom theology. It feels strange to be wondering where the denomination is going after only being in it for such a short time. Personally, I'm making my number one priority a commitment to better understand, better articulate, and better live our historic distinctives. ■

Anabaptist "burden" Brethren

Beginning with Carlton O. Wittlinger, the first archivist for the Brethren in Christ, a generation of students emerged who conducted significant studies in Brethren in Christ history and thought and did important writing in the 1960s that pointed to Anabaptist elements in the Brethren in Christ. Generally speaking, the Brethren in Christ joined the Mennonites with satisfaction and pride at the discovery of this common element in their rootstock in Anabaptism.

The Brethren in Christ could not claim a pure Anabaptist heritage, however, for they were the product of an evident synthesis that affected

the Brethren in Christ Church in the beginning and that continues to affect our life and thought to this present time. The "difference" in the Brethren in Christ mind from that of purely Anabaptist groups turns out to be something of a burden for them, holding them back from aspects of Christian expression that have become attractive to them.

The synthetic nature of the Brethren in Christ mind

Although the specific details of Brethren in Christ beginnings have not been established, the general outlines are agreed upon. The early Brethren drew from several different sources, melding these elements together. The ultimate product was a distinct denomination which differed from all others in the American Colonial period and the time of the beginning of the new nation.

The beginnings of the River Brethren are associated with a revival movement which touched Lancaster County (Pa.) in the second half of the 18th century. This can be traced to

*The late Owen H. Alderfer was an educator, served as General Conference Secretary, and most recently was bishop of the Central Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church. This article is an abridgement of the chapter by the same name in the book *Within the Perfection of Christ: Essays on Peace and the Nature of the Church*, edited by Terry Brensinger and E. Morris Sider, and available from Christian Light Bookstores or Evangel Publishing House.*

m as a for the n in Christ

by Owen Alderfer

the First Great Awakening in America which arose in New England in the 1740s. This was an overflow of revival which had its roots in Evangelical Pietism, a form of Christian expression drawn from the Bible and emphasizing a personal religion realized in an experience of the warm heart. Intellect and will were here modified by emotion in a movement which stirred Christians to new experiences and zeal for God. This Pietistic revivalism is one fundamental dimension underlying the Brethren in Christ mind and spirit.

Those who were to become Brethren in Christ were first in interaction with the Lancaster County United Brethren in Christ fellowship, an informal collection of persons who had come to a Pietistic form of personal faith. They rejoiced in this spiritual renewal, the personal assurance and joy in the new life. They reveled in the preaching, the fellowship meetings, and the prayer meeting celebrations.

However, they were not comfortable with what they regarded as a careless and irresponsible attitude

towards issues of obedience to the will of God that they saw revealed in the Scriptures. The United Brethren in Christ generally considered matters such as non-resistance, believers' baptism, foot washing, and the head covering for women to be matters of individual conscience, neither forbidden, nor enjoined by Scripture. This was not the case with the River Brethren (earliest name for the Brethren in Christ) element in the movement; for them these were non-negotiables. As a result the River Brethren withdrew from the majority and formed their own denomination.

The Pietistic character of that revival spirit has lived with the Brethren in Christ across the years of their history: evangelical conversion, personal assurance, heartfelt experience. This element, however, is qualified by the Anabaptist emphasis upon obedience, a total response to all that God asks in the Scriptures. Matters of life and practice are essentials in the life of the believer. In the Brethren in Christ these elements meld together to form a new entity. That synthesizing quality in the

Brethren in Christ opens the way to the incorporation of additional new elements in the working out of the life of the group and the development of its mind.

Anabaptism as promise and problem at the turn of the century

During the first 100 years, 1780-1880, the basic Brethren in Christ synthesis seems to have been comfortably intact. The Brethren in Christ were a faithful Bible-believing people seeking to work out their "quest for piety and obedience." The Brethren in Christ maintained the synthesis through careful observance of the basic elements grasped from the beginning. The leading of the Holy Spirit into the way of personal salvation was explained and extolled by preacher and layman alike in the gatherings of the body. It was made clear, however, that the way of Christ was not simply a kind of spiritual ecstasy—an emotional high; coming to God and knowing him included obedience. Only as one *is obeying* does one come to *know*. This is not legalism or justification by works; it is the uniting of the central elements of the faith-walk in the Christian way: "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

Given this set of mind, the Brethren in Christ were suspicious of much of "so-called" Christianity of the time. Some overemphasized piety at the expense of obedience; these came to great religious experiences but their lives did not reflect the divine expectations of full obedience. Others overemphasized obedience; their religion came forth as a burdensome legalism. As the Brethren in Christ went forth to share the good news in forming congregations and winning occasional converts they stressed their unique synthesis, seeking to build a biblical body of assured believers who walked fully in the way of the Lord—regardless of what Christians in the other churches did. The double expectations of piety and obedience doubtless had bearing on the slow growth of the Brethren in Christ. Their way was not an easy

one, but Jesus had made it clear that there was a cross to bear in the way he had introduced.

Developments at the beginning of the second century in the life of the Brethren in Christ (1880-1910) reflect a shift in attitudes relative to the maintenance of their special synthesis. The circumstances of their existence at the time brought the Brethren in Christ increasingly into contact with the mainstream of Christianity and rendered its expression attractive to them. This was particularly true among "the Brethren on the fringes," those in Canada, Ohio, Indiana, and Kansas—especially Kansas. During the 1870s and 1880s, Brethren in Christ from Pennsylvania had migrat-

ed to Kansas by the trainload, primarily through economic motivation. These were the adventuresome, the innovative, the daring Brethren who were willing to risk with new ideas. What was true in economic areas had application in religious expression as well.

As the Brethren in Christ visited Christians of other communions, mingled with them as their neighbors, and saw the good things that were happening in their churches, they began to ask questions: Are we missing something that has potential for greater Christian effectiveness personally, in reaching others for Christ, and even reaching around the world in missionary activity?

In this 30-year period, six dramatic innovations became a part of Brethren in Christ life:

1. The introduction of the Sunday school as an instrument of Christian education and nurture and an agency of evangelism in the church and beyond.

2. The *Visitor* as a vehicle for communication among an increasingly scattered membership and a tool for the communication of the gospel.

3. The incorporation of the revival meeting—to bring the lost to Christ.

4. Missions as an institutional expression of the desire to reach people for Christ in the homeland and overseas.

5. A church college as a center for educating the young people of the church generally and equipping Christian workers specifically.

6. The doctrine of holiness or entire sanctification as a possibility for deeper relation to God and fuller expression of his work of cleansing and empowering.

None of these were a part of the life of the church in any regular sense in 1880; all were by 1910. These six innovations greatly modified the shape of the church, marking an accommodation to the mainstream of Christianity in America at the time and a shift away from the obedience emphasis inherited from the Anabaptist pole of the synthesis.

The six innovations were drawn largely from revivalistic/pietistic mainstream Christianity. None would be regarded as Anabaptist. As a result, Anabaptism became something of a "problem" for the Brethren in Christ, "holding them back" from the progress they might experience as a church in the world. Why should not the Brethren in Christ move for-

Early and later Anabaptism

In its beginning Anabaptism was identified as an expression of radical Christianity taken back to the New Testament roots and lived out according to the perceptions of New Testament thought. This was an evangelistic, missionary Christianity that invaded the territory of the enemy and rescued people out of it for the sake of the Kingdom of God. The earliest Anabaptists focused on:

1. separation of church and state
2. believers church and baptism
3. the spread of New Testament faith

In the American context of the mid-18th century, separation of church and state was a growing reality. Anabaptism found expression in somewhat different emphases:

1. the community of faith
2. biblical nonresistance
3. full obedience to the details of the biblical faith
4. separation from the world

The latter emphases are the concerns of reference as we address contemporary Anabaptism and the Brethren in Christ. From here arise the points of tension between Anabaptist views and the world of today—including tension with contemporary Christianity and even mainline evangelicalism.

The Pietistic character . . . has lived with the Brethren in Christ across the years of their history: evangelical conversion, personal assurance, heartfelt experience. This element, however, is qualified by the Anabaptist emphasis upon obedience, a total response to all that God asks in the Scriptures.

ward with rapid growth and increased influence—even as the Baptists and Methodists—or even the newly forming Church of the Nazarene? And so, Anabaptism was both “promise” and “problem” for the Brethren in Christ in this period, 1880-1910. This may be fleshed out briefly here to make the point stated above.

First, each of the innovations noted placed stress on the interests, feelings, and values of the individual as over against the community. In each case the self was central and personal fulfillment was paramount. Anabaptism, recognizing the dangers of individualism, placed its emphasis upon the community. The individual, although free and precious, must be protected from herself or himself by the caring body. Each is responsible for the salvation and the sanctification of the other—you for me and I for you. Individual experience must be qualified by the wisdom and experience of the congregation. The individual call must be affirmed by the whole. Individualism, indeed, must be balanced by community.

Second, in each case there was a tendency to compartmentalize human experience: religious experience tended to be separated from other aspects of life. Christian experience was differentiated from other experience and set apart as a particular and identifiable sort of a nature all its own. One could be taught this experience—even children; having had it, one was assured of salvation. Anabaptism tended to seek to make life all-of-a-piece; all life was lived under God among a community of believers who help make each other to be accountable in the Christian journey. Momentary experiences had value only as they could be melded into the whole of life, verified by appropriate

behavior and lifestyle, and affirmed by the body as a whole.

Third, among the innovations was a tendency to accept and even glorify personal initiative and judgment at the expense of the whole. Individual response and expression were the keys in evangelization, education and nurture rather than the mutual caring and sharing of the life of the body. This was the emphasis upon the individual rather than the family. The synthesis stresses the value of both; revivalistic pietism tends to ignore the group dimension. The individual is stressed in response to the call to ministry, missions, or service of any kind rather than the call of the body out of its long experience and wisdom.

Fourth, in each case the spiritual process involved is abbreviated so that the process tends to be ignored in favor of immediate answers to long questions. Salvation and sanctification become the experience of a moment, whereas they had been seen as extended journeys with prolonged learning under the earlier synthesis. An *Evangelical Visitor* article could encapsulate into a page what takes a lifetime to work out. This has its values, but one must be careful that the individual does not confuse the analogy for reality. Missions with terms and concentrated programs become a substitute for a lifetime of relationship, living out the plan of God among a people to which one is called/sent.

And so, for Anabaptism, the “promise” of stability and balance becomes the “problem” for an “instant Christianity” that guarantees prompt forward movement with great results in terms of numbers and experiences. The “traditionalists” spoke out with anguish as they sensed the

dangers in the thrust associated with the innovations. Some were only fearful of change; others were expressing an instinct for the earlier synthesis, observing that something basic was being altered in the life of their church.

The increasing burden of Anabaptism for the Brethren in Christ since 1950

During the years between 1910 and 1950 the Brethren in Christ made efforts to come to terms with their fundamental synthesis. Their instincts told them that the tendencies characterized by the six innovations had tilted the denomination sharply toward piety, and conformity with American Christianity generally. The “wisdom of the body” was applied to recovering the delicate balance so crucial to the nature of the Brethren in Christ. During these years, holiness—a doctrine and movement which contributed to the pietistic shift—became a tool used to promote (or enforce) Anabaptist concerns.

Brethren in Christ evangelists, most of whose messages included holiness, stressed the concerns of obedience as necessary expressions of the life of holiness. The fullness of the blessing would be evidenced in appropriate lifestyles. For example, a 1920 article in the *Visitor* reported the essence of messages at the Cross Roads Church near Florin, Pa.: “The Word presented was plain and distinct, pointing the saints to Holiness and separation from the world.” Such statements could be multiplied from the *Visitor* and legislative material.

By the 1950s it was becoming evident that legislating obedience was a problematic approach for the Brethren in Christ. Before that decade was over, previous legislation on

The genius of the Brethren in Christ is in the delicate balance of the two emphases of the original synthesis. Decided effort has been expended across two centuries to preserve the balance. . . . [But] present emphases show little evidence of a return to the original balance.

dress and conscientious objection had been repealed. Personal endorsement of the ways of the Brethren was again a matter of moral persuasion, personal response, and individual conviction. Now a set of issues associated with Anabaptism began to come under serious challenge in the ways of the Brethren in Christ. From the mid-fifties on, Anabaptism has become an increasing "burden" for the Brethren in Christ as various directions in faith and practice challenge the basic synthesis.

The kingdom of God and the kingdom of this age

The doctrine of the two kingdoms has always been a part of the thinking of evangelical Anabaptism. As in New Testament Christianity, the distinction between the kingdoms was very apparent and those who resisted the Powers—the kingdoms of the age—often paid with their lives. In "Christian lands" the separation of the kingdoms becomes less apparent. If ever there was a time when an evangelical form of Christianity dominated the American scene, it was during the middle years of the last century. In such times and for much of the following century, delineation of the two kingdoms became more difficult. During this period, non-religious and outwardly immoral people had little hope of winning major elections in America. Christian ideals were held in the public sector as well as in the church.

Even in such a time most Anabaptists in America, including the Brethren in Christ, continued to hold clear lines of differentiation by non-voting, non-participation in the military, and a clear distinction between the political realm and the spiritual realm. As Brethren in Christ increas-

ingly became a part of the typical American life, the lines of demarcation between the kingdoms became less and less clear. As the Brethren in Christ became more and more associated with Evangelicalism—as seen in the six innovations—the Brethren drew closer to American political life and American culture and the old lines of separation between the kingdoms became less. Anabaptism was increasingly becoming a burden to the Brethren in Christ.

Separation and adaptation

Anabaptism in America over the last two centuries has been characterized by overt expressions of separation from the world as seen in plain dress, hesitancy to accept technological developments, rejection of worldly occupations and entertainments, and, generally, an emphasis upon work and worship as the appropriate expression of life. For many Anabaptist groups—including the Brethren in Christ—much of this aspect of the Anabaptist witness has given way to adaptations as Mennonites and Brethren entered the mainstream of life in North America.

If these changes reflect obvious adaptation to the world and contemporary culture, there are other modifications in Brethren in Christ life that reflect adjustments to the current climate of opinion and ways of doing things that are much more subtle. As the six innovations drew from evangelical Christianity of the late 1800s, so the adjustments from 1950 and forward draw from the mainstream of evangelical Christianity in this time. As mainstream Evangelicalism draws much of its impulse from the world around itself, so the Brethren in Christ, with that impulse, are pulled toward the world—and the spirit of

Anabaptism becomes an increasing burden.

Several couplets may help to make the point here. In each case, the first concept describes a characteristic of evangelical Christianity having affinity to present culture; the second, an Anabaptist opposite drawn from Scripture.

Individualism vs. community—This has already been discussed above.

Organization vs. brotherhood—Evangelical Christianity seems to be remarkably attracted to the organizational models of contemporary business. The best sellers of the business world are the texts for church growth and development specialists. Techniques, methodologies, and structures attract the brilliance and energy of business-oriented churchmen whose goal is the building of super-churches. Anabaptism stresses brotherhood and regards the tools and stratagems of the world with suspicion. Relationships are more important than structures; persons take precedence over programs.

Prosperity vs. stewardship—A prosperity mentality appeals to much of contemporary Christianity. Health, wealth, and happiness are evidences of God's blessing. This is applicable both to the individual and the organization: those under God's blessing are successful in terms of dollars and numbers. The Anabaptist focus is more closely associated with stewardship—responsible servanthood and the care of all God's resources. Creation, the family, the congregation—each and all of these take precedence over the person, resources, or success of the individual.

The Brethren in Christ as individuals or congregations have not gener-

ally been rich or powerful. When in the 1940s and 1950s it became evident that the denomination was losing ground, Brethren in Christ leaders were grieved and dismayed. They were not even retaining their own sons and daughters. When compared to the "successful" churches, the Brethren in Christ were doing very poorly. Maybe they could learn from the successful churches. Generally, it seemed, it was the Anabaptist elements that were holding them back. These were a burden to effectiveness and growth.

The National Association of Evangelicals had been established in 1942; this organization held out a hand of welcome to the Brethren in Christ. Here might be a possible source through which the Brethren in Christ could find the way out of their smallness and into a place of greater Christian witness. There was considerable uncertainty among Brethren in Christ leadership about joining NAE, largely because, as their instincts told them, this was not their kind of Christianity; indeed, it tended to be on the side of principles, ideas, and practices that were distinctly not Anabaptist. In the face of all this, the Brethren in Christ affiliated with the NAE in 1949. This took a relatively brief moment in General Conference that year, but it was a significant step in a direction away from Anabaptism.

Conclusion

Carlton O. Wittlinger captured the "Brethren in Christ accent" in the title for his definitive history of the denomination when he called it *Quest for Piety and Obedience*. The genius of the Brethren in Christ is in the delicate balance of the two emphases of the original synthesis. Decided effort has been expended across two cen-

turies to preserve the balance. In the six innovations around the end of the 19th century, the balance took a decided tilt in the direction of piety. In the years from 1910 to 1950 efforts were put into motion among the Brethren to regain the balance. From 1950 forward the balance has again

taken a tilt toward piety. Present emphases show little evidence of a return to the original balance. This will probably be the case as long as Anabaptism is regarded as something of a burden by the Brethren in Christ. ■

To think about:

1. List the characteristics of Anabaptism in one column on a sheet of paper, and the characteristics of Pietism/Evangelicalism in another. Then evaluate your own congregation. Which characteristics do you display—more from Anabaptism, more from Pietism, or a balance of both? What characteristics of your practice do you now recognize as being either Pietist or Anabaptist?
2. What would your congregation eventually lose if the Brethren in Christ Anabaptist distinctives were abandoned?
3. Reflect on how changes in secular culture often coincide with or are eventually incorporated into the church. For example, what was the relationship between the rise of the American "freedom" culture and the rise of Pietism? How has the increased stress on individualism led us to change our view of Anabaptism?
4. As explained in the article, where do you stand on (a) individualism vs. community? (b) organization vs. brotherhood? and (c) prosperity vs. stewardship?
5. Are any of the same elements present today that influenced the Brethren toward evangelicalism in the late 1800s? Who are the "Brethren on the fringes" today? Is this a cultural/sociological as well as a geographic distinction?
6. What do you think about Alderfer's statement: "So, for Anabaptism, the 'promise' of stability and balance becomes the 'problem' for an 'instant Christianity' that guarantees prompt forward movement with great results in terms of numbers and experiences"?
7. If you are resisting change in the Brethren in Christ Church in the 1990s, are you fearful of change because it is change, or are you (as Alderfer says) "expressing an instinct for the earlier synthesis"? How can you be sure?
8. What are some of the healthy manifestations of both Anabaptism and Evangelicalism/Piety that are worth retaining today?
9. How do you feel about Alderfer's assertion that the Holiness movement in the 20th century in essence balanced the denomination once again toward Anabaptism? Is it right to equate legislation of dress codes, regulation of entertainment, etc., with the Anabaptist stress on obedience to Scripture?
10. Can piety and obedience (Evangelicalism and Anabaptism) coexist in our church today, or will the Brethren in Christ always be like a pendulum, swinging between the two? ■

God at work in our world

God makes a family

Nancy Peterman—Bogota, Colombia

The last days before the Geigers left for furlough were stressful for many—last minute tasks to perform, anxiety on the part of the church people over their leaving, etc. Especially suffering were Perla and Olga, two teenage girls who, with their brother, were left alone in the world when their mother died two years ago. Over time they became very close to the Geiger family; Bob and Carol have taken their care as a “burden from the Lord”—to the point that they are unofficially adopted into their family. God knows what he is doing, though. He has done an incredible work in their lives during the last few months, which prepared them for this separation.

First of all, Olga, who has been a Christian for only one year, had a major fight with her brother, Gabriel, in April. Because of that incident, she began to live temporarily with the Geigers, but she could not shake the hate and resentment that she felt. Although she tried to go on as usual, she realized that this unforgiveness was affecting her spiritual life and her leadership on the youth committee. But she refused to budge.

During the visit of Henry and Martha

Ginder in June, the Geigers (including Perla and Olga) and I took a two-day getaway with them. There, we had a time of special prayer for Olga. She was finally able to forgive before God not only Gabriel, but first her alcoholic father, who seemed to be at the root of all this.

Immediately afterward, Perla and Olga, with five other youth from our congregation, participated in the National Christian Youth Congress, where they were challenged, taught and sent out to witness. Inexperienced but eager, Olga took the Four Spiritual Laws tracts around a city park and led eight people to the Lord.

Now really fired up, she wanted to take the last step, making things right with Gabriel. Two weeks of obstacles and excuses passed before they were finally able to meet together. The two proud siblings talked, asked forgiveness, prayed, and embraced. I've seen Olga transformed in the past few weeks—she just glows!

Perla, too, can tell stories of how God has worked in her life, being her heavenly father and teaching her about servanthood. I am thrilled that a woman from the church will have them in her tiny, warm, love-filled apartment during the Geigers' furlough months.

Mozambique memoir

Fred and Grace Holland—Ashland, Ohio

We are impressed with the Mozambique church. They are not without their problems, but they are very wholehearted and eager to learn. In most of our meetings we spoke through two interpreters: English to Portuguese and then into one of two local languages. God helped us to speak, the helpers to interpret and the people to hear! The receptivity of the people, their interest, response and interaction indicated to us that God is working.

The war has been devastating both in the cities and outside. At the time we arrived, peace talks in Rome gave some hope for an end to hostilities. But these broke down while we were in the country.

One day we were taken 68 miles west of Beira to an area where hundreds of refugees have built huts along the high-

way. They have also built a small church with a canvas roof. On this day 150 people packed into it. How they sang during the service! Afterward they served us a meal. We recognized clothing that had obviously come in the relief container.

We had been told that this highway is quite safe. But as we were returning, in a town only 18 miles from Beira, we learned that early that morning six resistance soldiers and two government soldiers had been killed in a three-hour battle. People express concern and discouragement over prospects for immediate peace, but they still hope for the future. They need our prayers.

An earthly father's gift

José León Herrera Hernandez—Tegucigalpa, Honduras

I write to give testimony of one more miracle that God has granted me. My earthly father is a country farmer who derives his living from his farm and cattle. He gave himself to the Lord at El Capulín Church on April 24 of this year, during the visit of Brother Graybill Brubaker. From the moment that he gave himself to Christ, he traveled with Brother Graybill and myself to visit the churches.

When we reached the Pan American Highway, Brother Curtis Book met the Brubakers with a vehicle to take them on to Nicaragua. My father and I waited for a bus to take us back to Tegucigalpa.

After waiting for a long time, being tired of waiting, my father said to me, “Son, I believe that you need a vehicle.”

“Yes,” I said, “but I am not able to buy one since I have five children. Four of them are in school, two in secondary school, so this has not allowed me to buy a vehicle. Certainly it is a necessity, but I am more interested in the education of my children.”

As we continued in conversation about this, my father realized that I was thinking clearly about my situation. But even though he knew that I was not able to buy one, he kept insisting that I needed a vehicle.

Finally I said to him, “Father, I am praying for a vehicle; I am trusting God that someday he will touch the heart of someone to give us money for a vehicle.

Director's Position Available

Timber Bay Children's Home in Northern Saskatchewan will be seeking a replacement for the director. The position is presently held by Tom Davies who will be completing his Voluntary Service term after six years and leaving the Timber Bay Area July of 1992. The director is responsible for the complete operation of the Children's Home and a staff of 25, reporting to the Board of Directors, Board for Brotherhood Concerns and General Conference. Experience in administration, budgeting, communication, child care, promotions and fund raising is desirable. This position would take effect July 1, 1992, after an appropriate time of transition.

Please send resume to: Chairperson of the Board, Timber Bay Children's Home, Timber Bay, SK, S0J 2T0 by December 31, 1991. For additional information, phone or fax (306) 663-5811.

I have been praying for this for several years, trusting God, who is the owner of the gold and silver." I shared with him Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it; the world and all who live in it."

After he heard my explanation of this verse, he said to me, "Son, look for a used vehicle, and be sure to check that the engine is good. It is not important how the vehicle looks; what is important is that the motor is in good condition. When you find one, tell me. I will give you the money."

I said, "Thank you, Father. I will look for one."

And that is what I did. There were some for 30,000 *lempiras*, for 20,000 and

for 15,000. I looked for a good motor, not just a nice appearance. When I saw a van available, I spoke to the owner about the condition of the "little bus." We arranged a price of L12,000.

I went immediately to my father and told him I had arranged for a "little bus." He asked me the price, and I told him. Immediately he gave me the money. After the microbus had proved itself with a month of travel with a Mennonite Youth Evangelism Team, seeing that the microbus had no engine trouble, my father told me to find out how much it would cost to have the van reupholstered and repainted.

I went to the owner of such a workplace. He told me the work would cost

L6,700. When I told my father, he said, "I will give L6,000; you obtain the L700." By this means we now have a microbus with comfortable capacity for 12 people, the vehicle I need to visit the churches.

God says we should give thanks for everything to our Creator. In this situation, my earthly father obeyed the Creator who told him to share that which God had given him. I give thanks to God that my father was used by God to give us L18,000 of that with which our Creator had blessed him. ■

Miracles needed

by Grace Holland

Thirty-five interested faces looked up at us. Some were familiar, but with added age-lines. Others were young and seemed quizzical as to what these returned missionaries, also with age-lines, would have to say.

Fred and I were back at Mtshabezi Mission and found our hearts doing little joy-leaps as we recognized old friends and felt Ndebele words churning inside. We also found ourselves wrestling with what it was we had come to do. We were longing for revival for the Brethren in Christ in Zimbabwe and believed that one way to foster it was to help people study God's word.

A good study program had been going in the churches in past years. Under Jake Shenk there had been many Theological Education by Extension (TEE) study centers and 125 students. The program had continued under national leadership; but then during the war for independence, finances faltered, it was too dangerous to travel, and the program died.

Ten years ago we began to pray for its revival. Sometimes there were hopeful signs; then they would fade. Our faith saw little encouragement, but when we were asked to spend some time in Africa this summer, it seemed the Lord's time to act.

We knew that reviving TEE in Zim-

babwe would take several miracles. First, local pastors and leaders would need to be eager for the training. But how would we contact more than a few of them in three short weeks? Second, official support was needed for the program. But leaders were already wrestling with many administrative problems, and there was no money. Third, we needed a way to produce the home-study books required. Nancy Shenk had spent years typing and mimeographing these books in the past. Where would anyone be found to do this now? We prayed hard.

The Bible school principal, Bruce Khumalo, sent out invitations for the three-week session. Local pastors and their assistants responded. The first class of each day consisted of intense study and discussion on spiritual warfare. Other sessions were on the mechanics of TEE. Old and young responded warmly and studied hard. There were just *enough* old books on hand to use for demonstrations. Students passed exams and practice-led TEE seminar sessions for each other. There were tears and laughter. These people wanted Theological Education by Extension!

On the last weekend the TEE committee of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe was invited to Mtshabezi. Five denominations including the

Brethren in Christ were represented. The great concern was for study materials, and these groups would cooperate in producing the books. The Baptists were sure their publishing house would print them and give a good price. No more stencils and duplicating ink!

On Monday the district overseers were invited to see what was happening. The bishop and two overseers came and listened to reports from our students. They seemed impressed with the prospect of a better way to pastor their pastors. It would take work, but they agreed to help. Official support!

Still someone needed to take TEE under his wing, provide a link with the Bible institute, help leaders with problems, and keep records of grades. It occurred to us that the retiring overseer might be the one to do this. We prayed pointedly. Next day the bishop told us this had already been decided!

But what about the preparation of manuscripts for the publishing house? Jake Shenk would be the ideal link, but how would he feel about adding this work to his overloaded schedule? Jake visited on the last day of the seminar and seemed delighted with the students' enthusiasm. He was sure Nancy would help with typing, and as for the publishing house—he knew some of those men and was sure he could help them make TEE books a priority!

Our hearts bounded as we left Mtshabezi. God had done it again. Our eyes of faith could see it all accomplished, even though many obstacles lay ahead. We would ask our friends to pray intensely for God's victory. Will you help? ■

Church News

Kenbrook Camp creates new "director of ministries" position

Applications are now being accepted for a full-time position for director of ministries at Kenbrook Bible Camp, a year-round camp and retreat ministry of the Atlantic Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

This position will begin on or about October 1, 1992, and will include responsibilities for directing the summer youth camp program as well as developing outdoor education and retreat programs, with special emphasis on programs for senior adults.

The decision by the Kenbrook board to add a full-time position is in response to the rapid growth of the summer youth camp ministry and a vision for ministry to one of the fastest growing groups in society—older adults. Specific responsibilities for the administration of wilderness trip programming will be transferred from the executive director to the director of ministries, freeing the executive director to focus on the area of development for the camp.

Applications for the position are being received through January 1992. Men and women with administrative experience in Christian education and/or camping are invited to apply. Further details and a job description may be obtained by contacting Eugene Wingert, Executive Director, 501 Pine Meadow Drive, Lebanon, PA 17042. Phone (717) 865-4547.

Lehman-Schletewitz ordained

Bishop Louis Cober was present at Walnut Valley Church, Walnut, Calif., on July 21 to recognize the transfer of Paul Lehman-Schletewitz's credentials to the Brethren in Christ Church. Pastor Lehman-Schletewitz was raised in a parsonage in both the Friends and Wesleyan Churches and was ordained in the Wesleyan Church in 1985. After graduating from Azusa Pacific College with a double major in English and religion, Paul went on to study at Asbury Theological Seminary where he received a Master of Divinity degree in 1984.

Allegheny Conference

Pastor Daryl Bundy spoke to the **Abundant Life** congregation, Uniontown, Pa., Sept. 4, about his shortened trip to Russia during the failed coup attempt. He displayed more than 300 photos, including those of the crowds in Moscow after the coup. ● On Sept. 22 the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., saw the drama "For Great Is Your Reward" and a slide presentation by the Gilmores on Venezuela. ● A ladies Bible study began meeting twice monthly under the direction of Dottie Crider at the **Antrim** church, Chambersburg. The topic was "A Healthy Self-concept for a Christian." ● Cathy Parsons was in concert Sept. 29 at the **Canoe Creek** church, Hollidaysburg, Pa. ● The **Chambersburg** congregation had a record attendance of 501 on Rally Day, Sept. 22, when people came to hear Ron and Carolyn Patty in concert.

The installation service and welcome tea for the new pastoral family, Rod and Gwen White and children, were Sept. 22 at the **Fairview Ave.** church, Waynesboro, Pa. ● The youth musical "Room 77" was given Aug. 31 and Sept. 1 at the **Five Forks** church, Waynesboro. The church is now providing free counseling on Mondays by lay counselor Leslie Provard. ● Si Lehman led revival services Sept. 23-29 at the **Green Spring** church, Newville, Pa. ● On Sept. 8, 15, and 22 the deacon board of the **Hollowell** church, Waynesboro, gave presentations to the congregation on key doctrinal and social issues, delineating the church's position on such matters as salvation, sanctification, lottery, divorce, music, and sanctity of life.

The Sept. 15 message at the **Martinsburg**, Pa., church by Phil Keefer was "Making Disciples through Prayer." The evening video was "The Case for Creation" by Dr. D. James Kennedy. Mary Lauver gave a harp concert on Sept. 22. ● "The Origin of Mankind" was the Sept. 15 evening film for the **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa. The September sermon series was on spiritual warfare. ● The

While at Asbury Paul became acquainted with the Brethren in Christ through several student contacts. In 1987 he and his wife came to Walnut and reopened the Walnut Brethren in Christ Church.

Paul and Kathy are active in their community where Paul serves as an officer in the Kiwanis and where Kathy is a family practice physician. In September the church celebrated the dedication of Paul and Kathy's first child, Joy Hannah, with 95 in attendance. "We deeply love both our local and general church family," says Paul. "God has been kind to us."

Singspiration Ministry of the **New Guilford** church this year includes an orchestra, women's Covenant Singers, Teen Choir, Kids Praise Choir, and Kids Choir. Friend Day was Sept. 29. ● The youth of the **South Mountain Chapel** congregation, Shippensburg, went miniature golfing on Sept. 14. ● On Sept. 15 Bishop Kipe led an afternoon seminar on outreach and assimilation for the **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md.

Atlantic Conference

The Youth for Christ musical team from Africa, Liberation '91, gave an Oct. 2 concert for the **Cross Roads** congregation, Mount Joy, Pa. ● MOMS devotions began Sept. 12 at the **Elizabethtown**, Pa., church on the topic "being a good steward of your time." The church recently has purchased a laser printer and video projector. A Sept. 29 meal celebrated the elimination of the mortgage debt. ● Oct. 13-20 was Spiritual Life Week with Henry Ginder at the **Fairland** church, Cleona, Pa. ● A group from **Fellowship Chapel**, Bronx, N.Y. attended the Sept. 22 Central Park Rally with Billy Graham. On Sept. 21 the church dedicated those serving as counselors. ● The children of Earl and Marie Gantz gave a 50th wedding anniversary celebration for them Sept. 29 at the **Free Grace** church, Millersburg, Pa.

On Sept. 15 the **Lancaster** congregation began viewing the Josh McDowell film series "Evidences of Faith" in the combined Sunday school hour. ● The **Manheim**, Pa., congregation enjoyed a concert by the Ministers of Music quartet on Sept. 22. ● Pastor Bob Sheetz began the Sunday school elective "On Being Brethren in Christ" in September at the **Manor** church, Mountville, Pa. The Manor sewing circle started its fall season on Sept. 18. ● On Sept. 15 people of the **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, shared poems and anecdotes encouraging teachers. They also viewed the video "Celebrate Sunday School: 4 Million Teachers Strong" provided by the Board for Congregational Life.

The **Maytown**, Pa., congregation held revival services Sept. 15-20 with Herb Hartman and family. The Drayer family of Ephrata gave a "Puppets in Christ" program Sept. 22. ● "Counsel for the Church" was General Secretary Don Shafer's message Sept. 8 for the **Millersville**, Pa., congregation. The evening service on teacher appreciation featured guest Esther Snyder. ● On Sept. 18 the congregational council of the **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mount Joy, Pa., voted in favor of building a Christian education addition. Loine Bert was resource person at a music workshop on Sept. 26. ● On Sept. 15 the **New Covenant** congregation, Quakertown, Pa., hosted the **Church of the Rock**, Bronx, N.Y., for a meal and concert by Kent and Marie Humphrey.

The **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation went on an all-church retreat at Kenbrook Bible Camp Sept. 26-29. Jack Ferry taught a fall class on finances. ● On Sept. 8 the **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa., began viewing a four-part film

series on hope produced by the Billy Graham Association. The vocal group Visions and the Pequea Handbell Choir were featured in the Sept. 15 community hymnsing. ● Sept. 22 was AIDS Awareness Sunday at the **Refton**, Pa., church, with a panel discussion of AIDS experts, videos, and question and answer time. ● Martha Lockwood spoke Sept. 8 at the **Skyline View** church, Harrisburg, Pa., on "Adoption: Choose Your Parents Wisely." ● The **Souderton**, Pa., congregation participated Sept. 22-29 with 75 area churches in Encounter '91, a revival at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School led by Steve Winfield Ministries. ● The Freys, missionaries to Zimbabwe, spoke Sept. 29 to the **Stowe**, Pa., congregation.

Canadian Conference

On Sept. 8, Doug Graham, missionary with International Teams with Ministry to the Chinese, spoke to the **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont. Sept. 20 was a family fellowship pig roast. ● On Sept. 11, the **Covenant** congregation, Penetanguishene, Ont., held a special council to establish its 10-year vision. ● The **Delisle**, Sask., church planned a Sept. 7 mini-carnival with concessions, bake sale, clown, and free activities for kids. Proceeds from the dunk tank went to the building fund. ● The **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., had its annual corn roast on Aug. 28. On Oct. 6 the congregation began meeting at the Gormley Missionary Church for services and children's program from 9:30-10:30.

On Oct. 6 the **Kindersley**, Sask., congregation had a potluck supper and viewed the film "Ordinary Guy." The church launched its youth ministry on Sept. 20. ● On the evening of Sept. 20 Sylvia Zook spoke to the **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., about her Teen Missions experience in Holland. ● The **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation hosted the Gospel Tide Hour dinner on Sept. 9. A missions focus service with Gordon and Susie Gilmore was Oct. 2. ● Sept. 8 was the Christian Education Celebration Kickoff '91 for the **Port Colborne**, Ont., congregation, including singing of the oldies but goldies Sunday school songs, attendance awards, consecration of workers. In the evening, the church had a "Touch Our Community" visitation project.

On Sept. 21 the **Ridgemount** congregation, Hamilton, Ont., had their Sunday school picnic at Waterbrook Farm Camp with horseback riding, swimming, and food. ● The **Sherkston**, Ont., church viewed the Gary Smalley film series "Love Is a Decision" from Sept. 8—Oct. 20. Pioneer Clubs began Oct. 2. ● Summer ministry with Teen Missions in Trinidad was the topic on Sept. 29 when Shannon Gazley spoke to the **Springvale**, Ont., congregation. The youth traveled to Niagara Christian College on Oct. 5 for Heritage Day. ● The **Upper Oaks** congregation, Oakville, Ont., enjoyed a September picnic at Coronation Park. ● On Sept. 13 the staff and spouses of the Pioneer Clubs at **Westheights** church, Kitchener, Ont., met for a barbecue fellowship. The youth enjoyed a progressive dinner on Sept. 13.

Central Conference

The Lloyd Miller family, members of the **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, depart-

ed in early November for a one-year term at Timber Bay Children's Home. ● Robert and Carol Geiger, on furlough from Colombia, spoke Sept. 1 at the **Ashland**, Ohio, church. ● The youth of the **Bethel** congregation, Merrill, Mich., recently spent a weekend at Wesleyan Woods Camp. ● The **Beulah Chapel** congregation, Springfield, Ohio, had a parking lot sale on Oct. 12. ● Stephen Ndlovu, retired bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe, spoke Oct. 2 to the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. He is presently doing post-graduate work in Elkhart, Ind. ● Care groups of the **Fairview** church, Englewood, Ohio, now meeting in homes for the fall, recently saw and discussed the video "Love Is a Decision."

The starting date for eight different care groups in the **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Ohio, was Sept. 11. Paul and Evelyn Book observed their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 18. ● The **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich., initiated a quiz team in September. Phil Keefer spoke Sept. 22 representing the Board for World Missions. ● On Sept. 8 the Covenant Players shared drama in the Sunday school and worship hours with the **Mooretown** congregation, Sandusky, Mich. The church has a building project needs bulletin board. People take an amount tag to claim their gift toward a specific need in the building process. ● Pianist-arranger Marilyn Ham was in

E.V. Timelines

100 Years Ago

Nov. 1, 1891 issue—"Goethe is credited with saying, 'Tell me not of your doubts and discouragements, I have plenty of my own, but talk to me of your hope and faith.' Good advice. . . . It should be hurled at, with such force as to break up hundreds of conversations and even many testimonies so-called in the average experience meeting."—A.Z. Myers, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Nov. 15, 1891 issue—J.W. Hoover reports on his mission trip with Samuel Baker through the 'northern part of Canada' arranged by the Mission Board of Canada. Their stops included Toronto, Richmond Hill village, Gormley, Siloam, and Collingwood.

75 Years Ago

Nov. 27, 1916 issue—"We are instructed to offer the Missionary book, *South and South Central Africa*, by Sr. H. Frances Davidson for 85 cents postage prepaid. . . . This book should be of special interest to all members of the church since it stands alone in the missionary literature of the church."

50 Years Ago

Nov. 3, 1941 issue—In Carl J. Carlson's "Report of Chicago Mission": "The Male Quartette from Messiah Bible College gave a fine service in song and testimony on July 7. . . . Thirty minutes of broadcasting time was accorded the quartette by WMBI."

In the same issue, EV Publishing House offered a package of 14 "colorful and artistic sheets of fancy wrapping, 6 large sheets of high quality white and red tissue, 51 colorful gummed Christmas seals, and 12 gift tags with Christmas designs or Scriptures, plus 4 packages (57 ft.) of novelty ribbon." The price, \$1.00.

25 Years Ago

Nov. 21, 1966 issue—In an editorial about the sale of Upland College: "A change, a crisis, a situation that presently leaves no alternative," writes J. N. Hostetter, "always demands the best in objectivity. . . . Indictments, self or others, can do little that is constructive, much that is harmful. Then, too, indictments can easily be misdirected."

10 Years Ago

Nov. 10, 1981 issue—"Electronic churches may spawn electronic denominations, a sociologist told participants at the National Religious Liberty Conference. . . . Hadden said such denominations also will be hastened by an ever increasing need for funds. . . . He added that more and more evangelists competing for money 'may hasten the day when one or more of the major ministries collapses.'"

Carland-Zion centennial

Beautiful weather and good attendance marked the Centennial Celebration of the Carland Zion congregation Aug. 30—Sept. 1. The event began with a tent service in which Pastor Eric Stanton welcomed the assembled people. The Rev. Verle Brubaker, Allentown, Pa., served as guest speaker for the evening. A bonfire with hot dogs and marshmallows and campfire singing followed the service.

Saturday's activities began with a pancake breakfast followed by games, a share time of testimony and song, a community potluck and pig roast, and a slide presentation of pictures

concert Sept. 8 at the Nappanee, Ind., church. The youth led the Sept. 15 service.

Three persons were baptized recently into the Peace Chapel congregation, Ravenna, Ohio. The church had a planning meeting on Sept. 26 to put together a church brochure and neighborhood canvassing packet. • The Phoneton congregation, Tipp City, Ohio, had a financial stew-

taken by former pastor Clinton Starr (1944-1956). The evening service was climaxed with a message by Rev. Harvey Stickley, Waterloo, Ont.

On Sunday morning the ordinances of foot-washing and communion were observed. James Marx brought the message entitled, "Love Never Fails." A balloon ascension was a main feature in the afternoon.

Special music for the celebration was provided by the Brubaker family; a trio (Evelyn, Phyllis and Nevin Engle); Rebekah Stanton and Debbie (Stanton) Pepper; Bob Darling; Idora Ade and family; the Bundenthal family; a Brady trio, and impromptu groups.

ardship seminar on Oct. 12. • On Sept. 22 the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, congregation saw the film "Bamboo in Winter" about persecution in China. • Dennis Gorcoff shared on Sept. 22 with the Sippo Valley congregation, Massillon, Ohio, about his ministry with Transport for Christ. • The speaker on the evening of Oct. 6 at the Union Grove church, New Paris, Ind., was William Cramer, art teacher and longtime Christian worker from Pennsylvania.

Midwest Conference

On Sept. 29 Paul Hostettler gave his presentation "People of God—Reaching Out Together" to the Abilene, Kan., congregation. The church hosted the Oct. 5-6 meeting of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society. • A Financial Workshop for Families began Sept. 8 at the Mound Park church, Dallas Center, Iowa. The congregation enjoyed a retreat Sept. 28-29 at Earlham Campgrounds. • The Mt. View congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo., recently baptized four persons. • On Sept. 1 Pat Velarde shared with the Navajo Chapel congregation, Bloomfield, N.M., about the beginning of an Overcomers Outreach group. Rick Cunningham began work in September. • The Oklahoma City, Okla., congregation attempted to visit every home in the surrounding neighborhoods to invite them to the Sept. 29 "grand opening." "Making the most of life" was a sermon series for the unchurched that began that day. • Morris Sider preached on Oct. 2 at the Zion church, Abilene, Kan. Six persons were baptized at Milford Lake on Sept. 15.

Director of Human Resources

For Mennonite mental health facility with 500 employees. Human resources experience and Master's in human resources or related field preferred. Active involvement in Anabaptist-related congregation required. Position available January 1992. Send resume to: Executive Director, Philhaven, P.O. Box 550, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064.

We appreciate those correspondents who are sending in their bulletins a month at a time, stapled together with the most recent date on the bottom. This saves us valuable time and helps keep down the cost of the magazine.

Pacific Conference

The sermon series in September for the New Community congregation, Pomona, Calif., was "How to Live a Less-Stressed Life." • The fall quarter combined adult-youth Sunday school class at the Pacific Highway church, Salem, Ore., was based on the book *Life With God: Basics for New Christians*. Bishop Cober spoke Sept. 15 and led a dedication service for Pastor and Linda Sander's new home. The congregation surprised the couple with practical gifts. • The Upland, Calif., church has a new Director of Music Ministries, Phil Munger; and a new Youth Director, Brian McDonald. Eight singers and 17 instrumentalists in the group New Sounds led worship on the evening of Sept. 22. Henry Ginder spoke in the morning.

Southeast Conference

Pastor Woomert of the Community Bible church, Sarasota, Fla., spoke Sept. 26 at the prayer partner seminar sponsored by station WJIS. • The East Lake congregation, Palm Harbor, Fla., recently surprised Pastor Carlin with the purchase of a large-screen TV on which to show evangelistic videos at the church. • The Holden Park congregation met for worship in the fellowship hall in September while renovation of the sanctuary took place. • On Sept. 8 guest Linden Wenger shared with the Winchester, Va., group about what older parents expect from adult children. In late September and early October the church hosted training sessions for volunteers at Blue Ridge Hospice. • The denominational priorities seminars for the Southeast Conference are planned for various locations on Dec. 7, 14, and Feb. 15.

Susquehanna Conference

The Big Valley congregation, Belleville, Pa., had revival meetings Sept. 22-29 with Charles McDonald. • The youth and families of the Carlisle, Pa., church had their kickoff event Sept. 4 at J.O. Lehman Retreat. The Gospel Tide Hour radio choir was in concert Sept. 22. • Ken and Linda Letner were installed as pastoral couple Sept. 1 of the Cedar Grove congregation, Mifflintown, Pa. • On Sept. 15 the Cedar Heights church, Mill Hall, Pa., had a Family Life Conference with Earl and Sharon Herr. The Women's Fellowship had a lawn sale on Sept. 21. • Steve Moore was the Oct. 5-8 missions speaker at the Cumberland Valley church, Dillsburg, Pa.

Senegal was the focus of a Sept. 21-22 missions conference at the Dillsburg, Pa., church with Jay and Judy Smith. The video "Mothers and Daughters" was shown at the Sept. 10 Ladies Fellowship meeting. • Chris Weinhold will begin in January as Minister of Pastoral Care at the Grantham, Pa., church. Howard Landis shared about his trip to Nicaragua, and Cindy Cassel about her past years of teaching in China

Stories on the way

A Mennonite Central Committee 33-minute 16mm film or VHS video cassette

A sampler of MCC experiences Includes stories, images and music from Bangladesh Canada Nicaragua United States

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Mennonite Central Committee

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134 Plaza Drive
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(204) 261-6381

at a Sept. 18 service. • "God's Agenda for the Church" was Bishop Hawbaker's Sept. 8 talk at the **Jemison Valley** church, Westfield, Pa. A golf outing was sponsored on Sept. 25 with proceeds going to missions. • The **Locust Grove** congregation, York, Pa., had revival services Oct. 27-30 with Carl Shank from Carlisle.

Members of the **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa., attended the Sept. 7 Messiah Village Fall Festival. • A Sept. 22 open house at the new **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church allowed interested persons to inspect the building progress. • Speaker on Sept. 18 at the **Messiah Village** church, Mechanicsburg, was Rodney Frey, preparing for mission work in Mexico. • John Byers spoke on Sept. 15 to the **Morning Hour Chapel** congregation, East Berlin, Pa. • The **Redland Valley** church, York Haven, Pa., had a pig roast on Sept. 8. Carol Geiger shared at the Oct. 9 WE CARE homemakers' fellowship meeting. • The women's auxiliary of the Wesley church, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa., had a food stand and bazaar tables at the annual community Holly Festival Sept. 21. The Hartman Harmonies ministered on Sept. 8, Friend Day.

For The Record

Births

Allcorn: Taylor Quinn, May 15; Robert and Sharon (Heisey) Allcorn, Sandia congregation, N.M.

Armstrong: Stephen Michael, Sept. 27; Bob and Lisa Armstrong, Mt. Pleasant congregation, Pa.

Besecker: Ashlie Rachel, Aug. 25; Karen Besecker, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Drennen: Jared Richard, Aug. 26; Rick and Sylvia Drennen, Refton congregation, Pa.

Eberly: Blayde Chapman, Sept. 23; Glenn and Linda (Leaman) Eberly, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Egolf: Lindsey Rochelle, Sept. 8; Terry and Kathy (Besecker) Egolf, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Engle: Madelein Rose, Aug. 27; Perry and Marta Engle, New Community congregation, Calif.

Fager: Cody Daniel, July 22; Lonny and Nancy Fager, Mt. View congregation, Colo.

Flowers: Erica Lynn, Aug. 28; Tom and Sue Flowers, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

Fortner: Jesse Alexander, Aug. 15; Jim and Lorinda (Cober) Fortner, Naples, Fla.

Gelnett: Katelyn Joy, July 19; Daryl and Joyce Gelnett, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

Lebeck: Jeffrey Allan Bradley, Aug. 24; Brad and Alison (Jerry) Lebeck, Stayner congregation, Ont.

Lenehan: Jacob Eli, June 13; Steve and Shawn Lenehan, Mt. View congregation, Colo.

Lofthouse: Amy Elizabeth Jean, Aug. 3; Donald and Bonnie (Wideman) Lofthouse, Heise Hill congregation, Ont.

McIntyre: Jennifer Lynn, Aug. 15; Scott and Cindy (Bittinger) McIntyre, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

The United States Senate has confirmed the appointment of Rev. Eugene L. Madeira to the National Advisory Council on Educational Research and Improvement. The council will have a key role in advising President Bush on his program for Educational Improvement 2000. Madeira retired in 1989 from the Pennsylvania Dept. of Education, where he was director of recruitment for the Pennsylvania Migrant Program. He worked prior to that for the school district of Lancaster (Pa.) as founder and director of the Adult Enrichment Center. After a sabbatical in Nicaragua in 1980, he worked as a bilingual resource person. He attended the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church from 1954-55 and 1960; the Refton church in 1969; and the Lancaster congregation since 1977. He is taking Brethren in Christ core courses to prepare for transfer of his ordination credentials to the Brethren in Christ Church.

We received a note from Mrs. Fern Groff, Colorado Springs, Colo., who writes: "In 1986 a 'Heritage Cook Book' was compiled and we were asked to send in recipes our mothers used. So I sent in a communion bread or wafer recipe that my mother used often. I didn't get one of the books, but someone else read the recipe to me on the phone awhile back, and I noticed it said one-half *cup* of butter in the book instead of one-half *pound* . . . and about two-thirds cup of milk." She concludes, "I am so sorry about that mistake. I don't know who made it, and hope it hasn't caused anyone a problem." (The recipe is easy to find—it's the first one in the book.)

Stephen N. Ndlovu graduated May 24 with a Masters Degree in Theological Studies from Goshen Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Currently he is spending the fall semester in post-graduate studies at the seminary. A former bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe, Ndlovu plans to teach at the Theological College of Zimbabwe next year.



"Aging in the Faith Community" is the theme of an inter-Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conference to be held at four locations in June 1992. George Kibler, Brethren in Christ representative to the planning committee, notes that all congregations will be urged to send an inter-generational team of two to four persons to one of the conferences:

Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.	Friday-Sunday, June 5-7
Pacific College, Fresno, Calif.	Friday-Sunday, June 5-7
Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.	Friday-Sunday, June 12-14
Bethel College, Newton, Ks.	Friday-Sunday, June 26-28

More information will be available in January.

In his role of personnel coordinator for the denomination, Harvey Sider is seeking to locate persons who would have interest and appropriate expertise to serve on general church boards as well as in other areas of denominational life. Pastors and other leaders are being invited to send him the names of persons they could strongly recommend for such assignments, together with such information as approximate age and the specific talents which they would bring to the work of general church boards. (Board and job descriptions are found in the Manual of Doctrine and Government.) Contact Harvey by Dec. 10 with your suggestions. His address and phone: 1301 Niagara Parkway, Fort Erie, Ont., Canada L2A 5M4. (416) 871-7769.

etc.

McNulty: Matthew Kevin, Aug. 11; Kevin and Debbie (Hawbaker) McNulty, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Miller: Taylor Rose, Sept. 30; Michael and Norma Miller, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

Murphy: Matthew Josiah, Sept. 4; James and Angela (Heisey) Murphy, Sandia congregation, N.M.

Murray: Dylan Carey, Sept. 17; Michael and Tonya Murray, Christian Union congregation, Ind.

Ryder: Lauren Brenna, July 30; Randy and Ann Ryder, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Shearer: Jared Thomas, Sept. 1; Benjamin and Lori (Leaman) Shearer, Manor congregation, Pa.

Sider: Jenna Elisa, Aug. 19; Bruce and Pam Sider, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Slick: Allyson Nicole, Sept. 5; Robert and Carla (Martin) Slick, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

Stump: Abbi Larissa, Sept. 28; Duane and Cheryl Stump, Union Grove congregation, Ind.

Walker: Joshua William, Aug. 15; Ian and Jennifer (Quinn) Walker, Stayner congregation, Ont.

Wyant: Brittany Lynn, Aug. 18; Ron and Kristine (Hartwig) Wyant, Stayner congregation, Ont.

Yoder: Katrina Lynn, Aug. 21; Larry and Teresa (Ackerman) Yoder, Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa.

Money Matters

Ministry, prayer, stewardship

by W. Edward Rickman

Cooperative Ministries

Receipts—Year to Date

January 1 - September 30, 1991

	1991	1990
Proportionate and		
Designated	<u>1,955,828</u>	<u>1,803,690</u>
Congregational	1,845,727	1,626,420
Individual	110,101	177,270
Direct Giving	<u>282,381</u>	<u>220,015</u>
Congregational	117,820	123,993
Individual	164,561	106,022
Total to Date	<u>2,238,209</u>	<u>2,033,705</u>
Total Budget	<u>3,835,885</u>	<u>3,749,096</u>
Received to Date	58.34%	54.24%

There is a sense of spiritual anticipation in the air! The entire brotherhood is in the midst of a November "Month of Prayer." Who can begin to imagine what God may do through us, and in us, and with us? The possibilities are inestimable.

As we progress through this Month of Prayer, it is my desire that God would speak to me about many of the specific areas of my life where I need renewal, strength, and faith. My hope is that every individual who participates will discover new facets of truth about God and his will for their personal life.

But beyond those personal benefits, I am believing God to do some great things for the Brethren in Christ Church. Allow me to share, from my perspective, three major areas of expectation for this Month of Prayer. Those three areas are centered around ministry, prayer, and stewardship.

Ministry

My major prayer burden is that God would restore our sense of ownership and excitement in the ministries he has given us. There are many old clichés and sayings which describe the subtle loss of focus and vision which can so easily occur: "You can't see the forest for the trees." "You don't realize what you have until you lose it." "You have taken it for granted and lost it."

Over the years, the ministries of the Brethren in Christ Church have grown and flourished in both size and effectiveness. But because so many other "media exaggerated" ministries clamor for our attention, it is easy to lose the vision for the tremendous (though quiet) ministries God has given the Brethren in Christ. It's

even possible that we have developed an inferiority complex. We don't need to! We have accomplished *so* much and often we've done it with *so* little!

Consider the fact that our world missions outreach has developed an international church that outnumbers the North American church. It was accomplished through the use of approximately eight percent of our total giving over the years. God has blessed our church with this ministry.

Consider the fact that over the past 15 years, 69 new churches have been successfully planted with a current membership of 2,059 persons and an average worship attendance of 3,465. And all of that was accomplished with no significant increase in our outreach budgets.

Consider the fact that congregational life ministries have provided training for our Christian education staff, developed improved literature, provided strategy for growth, and encouraged our youth in Bible quizzing as well as many other areas. The church has been blessed.

Consider the fact that brotherhood concerns have addressed many social issues and brought relief to many hurting, hungry, and underprivileged people through urban ministries, children's homes, and direct relief projects literally around the world. The world has been touched.

Consider the training ministry of our ministry and doctrine board which has assisted in training new and current ministers to effectively serve the church. Our ministry has been strengthened!

The administration of the church has provided us with caring and loving lead-

Weddings

Betoni - Valdez: Melvina, daughter of Larry and Anna Belle Valdez, and Byron, son of John, Sr. and the late Ruby Betoni, Aug. 31, at Navajo Chapel with Rev. Jeff Sechrist officiating.

Carlson - Ginder: Donna, daughter of Glenn and Joyce Ginder, Nappanee, Ind., and Ross, son of Paul and the late Patricia Carlson, Sacramento, Calif., Sept. 14, in a garden wedding in Orange, Calif., with Rev. Andy Comiskey officiating.

Eyer - Watkins: Lisa, daughter of Clarence Watkins, Broad Top City, Pa., and Bradley, son of Keith and Delores Eyer, Chambersburg, Pa., Aug. 3, at Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

Francisco - Castillo: Faye, daughter of Dan and Alice Castillo, Albuquerque, N.M., and Ernie, son of Jack and Della Francisco, March 23, at Sandia Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Church with Rev. Marion J. Heisey officiating.

Gerdes - Schopf: Carol A., daughter of Edward and Annette Schopf, Mountville, Pa.,

and Heiko, son of Ralf and Berti Gerdes, Pope Valley, Calif., Sept. 14, at Union Baptist Church with Rev. Gordon C. Blossom officiating.

Gey - Butler: Jody June, daughter of June Butler, and Jeffrey Scott, son of Mary Gey, Sept. 7, at Perkiomen Valley Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Daniel Zagorski officiating.

Gilmore - Fox: Krista Lynn, daughter of John and Sharon Fox, Fort Erie, Ont., and Michael Glen, son of Glenn and Dolly Gilmore, Wainfleet, Ont., Aug. 17, at Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard J. Chester officiating.

Grimmell - Biggins: Violet Irene Biggins, Fort Erie, Ont., and Gerald Chester Grimmell, Fort Erie, Sept. 14, at Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard J. Chester officiating.

Groff - Heisey: Marie Lynn, daughter of Lloyd and Joyce Heisey, Mount Joy, Pa., and Marvin Ray, son of John H. and Ruth Groff, Millersville, Pa., Sept. 6, at Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church (Pa.) with Rev. Wilmer Eby and Rev. Dale H. Engle officiating.

Groff - Layman: Lisa Joy Layman, daughter of Richard and Carolyn Groff, Leola, Pa., and Gary E., son of John and Ruth Groff, Millersville, Pa., July 4, at Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. James Ernst officiating.

Hamelin - Beausoleil: Monique Helene, daughter of Leonard and Helene Beausoleil, Penetanguishene, Ont., and Peter Paul, son of Harold and Therese Hamelin, Penetanguishene, Sept. 7, at Covenant Brethren in Christ Church, Ont., with Rev. Glenn A. Robitaille officiating.

Heisey - Caldwell: Nancy Jean, daughter of James and Lois Caldwell, Paoli, Pa., and Terry Lane, son of Marion and Rachel Heisey, Tijeras, N.M., July 20, at Paoli Presbyterian Church with Rev. James Caldwell and Rev. Marion J. Heisey officiating.

Hess - Stoudt: Jodi Louise, daughter of Tom and Louise Stoudt, Lancaster, Pa., and David Lamar, son of J. Glenn and RoseMary Hess, Washington Boro, Pa., Sept. 28, at Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Omer E. King officiating.

Kramer - Brandt: Deborah Lynn, daughter of LeRoy and Linda Brandt, Llewellyn, Pa., and Kyle Timothy, son of Raymond and Jean Kramer, Orwigsburg, Pa., Aug. 10, at Tremont Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. David Climenhaga officiating.

MacBride - Cassel: Susan Joy, daughter of Wayne and Ruth Cassel, Grantham, Pa., and Robert Frank, son of Donna and the late Robert G. MacBride, Cape May, N.J., Sept. 28, at Grantham Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Robert B. Ives officiating.

Mosemann - Weaver: Rosemary Grace, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Weaver, Lancaster, Pa., and David Russell, son of Winifred and the late David W. Mosemann, Leola, Pa., Sept. 14, at Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Marvin L. Weaver officiating.

Peachey - Allison: Sheryl Renee, daughter of Pauline and the late Dale Allison, Mifflintown, Pa., and Daryl Lynn, son of Gary

ers who have endeavored to walk with God and lead the church in growth and obedience.

The educational institutions of our church, such as Messiah College and Niagara Christian College, have effectively trained our youth for service to God and humanity.

When you look at the whole picture, we have much for which to thank God. May God give us a renewed vision of the tremendous resource we have in the ministries of our church.

Prayer

My second burden is that God will renew our prayer focus as a church. The promise of God has always been that prayer was the releasing agent of every resource and spiritual blessing that God could provide to his people.

Prayer is also the key to renewal of our vision for future ministry. Isaiah 6 and other Scriptures are indicative of God's ability to restore vision, cleanse, and consecrate us for service.

The practice of prayer will teach us the power of prayer. The effects of prayer will teach us the necessity of prayer.

Stewardship

My third prayer burden is that God will revitalize our stewardship commitment to meet the challenge of our ministries. Jesus said: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Conversely, the other side of that truth would hold that where your heart is, there will your treasure be also. There really can be no separation of our treasure or resources and where our heart really is.

Over the past five years, the total giving of our church has increased as follows: 1985—\$14,033,473; 1990—\$20,774,218. This is a 48 percent increase.

During the same period, our expenditures at the local level have been as follows: 1985—\$10,166,817; 1990—\$15,594,578. This is a 53.4 percent increase. Over the same period, our giving to the Brethren in Christ general ministries has been as follows: 1985—\$3,063,802; 1990—\$3,470,036, a 13.3 percent increase.

The year 1986 was the highest year ever for giving to Cooperative Ministries: \$3,568,009. The 1990 giving was actually 2.7 percent less than the 1986 giving.

God has given (entrusted us with) the ministries! God has given us adequate resources! God would have us renew our stewardship in supporting those ministries!

The only way to maintain our ministries and buy up the opportunities God has put before us is to recognize our personal responsibility in stewardship.

God, grant us renewal, revival, and revitalization! Let our thanksgiving abound in our commitment to your work! Amen.

Ed Rickman is the Director of Stewardship, U.S.A.

Board for Congregational Life music scholarship recipients

The Board for Congregational Life recently announced the recipients of this year's scholarships. Melanie Hess, Jeffrey King, Lorinda Myers, and Rochelle Sollenberger were selected out of 33 applicants to receive \$200 music scholarships for private music lessons.

Melanie Hess, 16, plays the trumpet and piano at the Mechanicsburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church. She will apply her scholarship to organ lessons so she can better use her talent for God in the local congregation.

Jeffrey King, 17, shares in the music ministries of the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church near Lancaster, Pa. Jeff's congregational involvement includes morning worship, junior worship, and youth group. He plays piano and guitar. He will use the scholarship for guitar lessons in order to "use my talents for the church" under the Lord's guidance.

Lorinda Myers, 17, is active in music ministry at the Manor Brethren in Christ

Church, Columbia, Pa., where she accompanies soloists and is a member of the congregation's orchestra. She also sings with the Celebration Singers. Lorinda's scholarship will be used for cello lessons. Her goal is to become involved in Christian music.

Rochelle Sollenberger, 14, attends the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church, Chambersburg, Pa., where she sings in the teen choir, plays in the church orchestra, and does accompanying for congregational singing. Rochelle will use her scholarship for further training in piano and organ. She wants "to share Christ's love through a God-given talent."

The Board for Congregational Life is privileged to make these scholarships available each year through their Music Trust Fund. Scholarship applications will be available again next summer for young people who are studying music and are actively participating in their church's music program.

and Lois Peachey, Port Royal, Pa., Sept. 7, at Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Bishop John Hawbaker and Rev. Ken Letner officiating.

Perkins - Grimsby: Michelle Grimsby, daughter of Timothy and Kathleen Stubbs, Englewood, Ohio, and David Perkins, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rolfe, Sept. 21, at Fairview Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Samuel Hollingsworth officiating.

Shaffer - Hepner: Crystal Ann, daughter of Kenneth and Ruth Hepner, McAlisterville, Pa., and Lee Jonathan, son of Stanley and Geraldine Shaffer, Mt. Pleasant Mills, Pa., Sept. 14, at Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Kenneth R. Hepner officiating.

Shank - Brownsberger: Nora Jean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Brownsberger, Mount Joy, Pa., and Glenn L., son of Martha and the late Elmer Shank, Sr., Elizabethtown, Pa., Sept. 28, at Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. David L. Hall officiating.

Simpson - Meily: Karen, daughter of Joseph and Margaret Meily, Lebanon, Pa., and William, son of William and Phyllis Simpson, Harrisburg, Pa., Aug. 10, at the home of the bride with Rev. Vern Bosserman officiating.

Sweeley - Herr: Michele, daughter of Samuel and Susan Herr, Lock Haven, Pa., and Leonard, son of Leonard A. and Lela Sweeley, Howard, Pa., Sept. 28, at Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating.

Walter - Hess: Brenda S., daughter of Elvin and Sue Hess, Conestoga, Pa., and David E., son

of Claude and Janet Walter, Holtwood, Pa., Sept. 7, at Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Omer E. King officiating.

Wolff - Bricker: Alice, daughter of Mrs. L. J. Bricker, and Tim, son of Marshall and LaVerne Wolff, Waynesboro, Pa., Sept. 29, at Renfew Park, with Rev. Wilbur Besecker officiating.

Obituaries

Bert: Lela M. Bert, born Oct. 19, 1914, daughter of Eli and Katie Hoover Myers, died July 11. Her husband John S. Bert, Sr. died in 1983. Surviving are 10 sons: Daniel J., Asa E., Mark E., John S. Jr., Samuel Z., Cornelius M., Joel R., Nathan E., Abram C., and Jared R.; 7 daughters: Miriam B. Kelly, Sarah E., Lois J. Negley, Eunice M. Myers, Joanna R. Henschel, Deborah A., and Dorcas A.; 36 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren; 3 brothers, Roy L. Myers, Carl H. Myers, and Merle H. Myers; and a sister, Margaret Hock. She was a member of the South Mountain Chapel congregation, Pa. For 50 years she and her husband and children traveled from outside the community to help establish and support South Mountain Chapel. She was South Mountain's Key Person for Messiah Village Auxiliary, and the contact person for the Gospel Tide Hour. The funeral was held at the Air Hill church with Rev. Stephen Russell, Rev. Roger Witter, and Rev. Thomas Bouch officiating. Interment was in the Air Hill cemetery.

Lutz: Cyrus G. Lutz, born Dec. 31, 1906, son of Cyrus D. and Martha Good Lutz, died Sept. 11. Surviving are his wife, Barbara (Heisey); a foster son, S. Paul Sides; a sister,

Mary Shenk; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. He was a 1933 graduate of Messiah College and was ordained to the ministry in 1934. He pastored the Refton congregation from 1934-1956, at Bethel (Va.) in 1958, at the Pequea church from 1958-1972, and at Carland (Mich.) from 1973-74. His preaching combined thoughtful insights and a quiet but delightful sense of humor. He worked well with people and modeled gentleness, humility, kindness, and joy. He was a member and secretary of the ministerial credentialing board of the Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral was held at the Pequea church with Rev. Robert Lehman and Rev. Luke Keefer, Sr., officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Tribute

Once more we gather in memory and in tribute to the life of one of God's servants. During the many years of Rev. Lutz's service to the Brethren in Christ he was always supportive of pastoral leadership and ready to be involved. He was known for his pleasant smile and his warm personality. Now that our brother's voice is silent, it is evident that the fruit of his labors will remain. To his family, who sense their loss of his presence, we express our sympathy and pray for them God's comfort.

Warren L. Hoffman, Bishop
Atlantic Conference

Merrill: Mary E. Merrill, born Aug. 17, 1931, daughter of Henry and Mina Harris Walizer, died Sept. 17. She was a member of the Cedar Heights congregation, Pa., and the Women's Fellowship Class. Surviving are her husband, Robert G. Merrill; a son, Robert, Jr.; two sisters; and two grandchildren. The service was held at the church with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating. Interment was in St. John's Cemetery.

Sheeder: Raymond R. Sheeder, born Mar. 31, 1898, died Aug. 21. Preceding him in death were his wife, Grace; two daughters, Madalyn Goodney and Pat Mongold; and a son, Glen. Surviving are a son, Stewart; a daughter, Bernice Keller; and many grandchildren. He was a member of the Hummelstown, Pa., congregation. The funeral was held at Buse Funeral Home with Rev. Jay E. Sisco officiating. Interment was in Broad Top City Cemetery.

Shubbuck: James Shubbuck, 34, born in Lexington, Ky., son of Edmond and Frances Shubbuck, died July 18. Surviving are his parents; a son, Daniel; and two sisters, Debbie Wise and Susan Joycox. He had formerly attended the Bertie church, Ont., and had family connections in the Knifley and Bloomington churches in Kentucky. The funeral was held at Kerr Brothers Funeral Home, Lexington, with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating. Interment was in Hilcrest Memorial Park.

Yost: Donald M. Yost, born Nov. 10, 1915, died Aug. 27. Preceding him in death was his wife, Thelma M. Surviving are a son, Kerry E.; a daughter, Donna Bachmandy; two stepsons, Fred K. Collins, and Robert H. Collins; and two grandchildren. He was retired from the former Toledo Scales Co. and was a World War II veteran. He was a member of the West Side congregation, Pa. The funeral and interment were at the East Harrisburg Cemetery with Rev. James Sollenberger officiating. ■

General Conference Information

We continue to provide you with information about General Conference 1992 as it is available to us in our negotiations and planning with McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

The General Conference will convene on Saturday, July 4, at 1:00 p.m. Business sessions are scheduled to conclude at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 9.

Registration

Registration is scheduled for Friday, July 3, from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and Saturday morning, July 4, from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Plan to arrive in sufficient time to register and to give yourself opportunity for orientation to your housing accommodations and the location of various activities and sessions. We suggest you plan to arrive no later than 10:00 a.m. on Saturday.

Information regarding flight destinations will be available with the registration application which will be an insert in the January *Visitor*.

Pre-General Conference event

A pre-General Conference event is planned by the Board for Brotherhood Concerns for July 2 and 3, convening Thursday evening and concluding Friday evening. "Bridge to the City: A Conference on Urban Ministry" will highlight existing Brethren in Christ urban ministries and challenge us to think about the city in new ways. Watch for additional information in the *Visitor* and brochures which will be made available. Applications for lodging and meals will be included in the same registration form as for General Conference.

For more information on the urban ministries conference preceding General Conference, contact Harriet Bicksler, 500 S. Angle Street, P.O. Box 246, Mount Joy, PA 17552; phone (717) 653-8251, or Don Shafer, P.O. Box 245, Upland, CA 91785, phone (714) 946-0088.

To aid in budget planning

The following preliminary information about university residences and meals will help you in early planning.

Accommodations

\$25.65 (Cdn) - \$23.10 (US) double occupancy per person, per night

\$31.70 (Cdn) - \$28.55 (US) single occupancy per person, per night

(No room charge for children 18 or younger who bring their own sleeping bags and stay in their parents' fully-occupied room.)

A family rate is available at \$21.00 (Cdn) - \$18.90 (US) per

person per night. This allows for two double rooms together, for housing of two adults and a maximum of two children who are 18 years or younger.

Meals

Meals at McMaster will include:

a hot breakfast	\$ 5.88 (Cdn)	\$ 5.29 (US)
a cold lunch	\$ 8.07 (Cdn)	\$ 7.26 (US)
a hot dinner	\$11.81 (Cdn)	\$10.63 (US)

Rates for children ages 5-10 will be:

a hot breakfast	\$ 2.54 (Cdn)	\$ 2.29 (US)
a cold lunch	\$ 3.60 (Cdn)	\$ 3.24 (US)
a hot dinner	\$ 5.41 (Cdn)	\$ 4.87 (US)

There will be no charge for meals for children 4 and younger.

The above rates include tax, with the exception that PST is not charged on meals under \$4.00 (Cdn).

A three-meal-a-day plan will be available as well as a two-meal-a-day plan (breakfast and lunch).

[Please note: the above figures may be slightly different on the actual registration form which will be available in January 1992.]

Camping and motel accommodations

Camping accommodations in the Hamilton area are available within 25-35 minutes from McMaster University with rates approximately \$19 (Cdn) per day for full hookups. Motel rates range from \$45 to \$75 (Cdn) per day. A list of recommended camp sites and motels will be available with the registration form in January.

Registration fee

A registration fee will be charged for everyone 18 years and over attending day sessions at General Conference. The amount is either a total fee of \$25 (Cdn) - \$22.50 (US), or a per-day fee of \$6 (Cdn) - \$5.00 (US), whichever is less. There is no registration fee for those attending evening sessions only.

Activities for children are planned. There is no registration fee for children. Youth age 12 and over will pay a youth registration fee to cover program expenses—about \$35 (Cdn) - \$32.00 (US).

For more information

We continue to work to make General Conference in 1992 a positive experience for all concerned. If you need more information, please contact Winnie Swalm, Box 103, Duntroon, ONT, Canada L0M 1H0, phone (705) 445-6825. Fax (705) 773-0035—attention "L.Swalm."

—Winnie Swalm, convention director;
Laurie Hadden and Mary Fretz, associate directors

It's time to renew your *Visitor* sub- scription!

The annual *Visitor* subscription campaign is now in progress in congregations across North America. Or you may renew your subscription by mail. Renewal rates are listed on page 3.

☛ Don't let your subscription expire!

Messiah College News

Issachar's Loft challenges students to make a difference

A new ministry has taken up residence, literally, at Messiah College. Doug Bradbury and his wife, Shelly, have turned their house into a ministry place called Issachar's Loft that challenges the students of Messiah to take a stand as Christians and make their mark on the world. The Bradburys had been Resident Directors at Messiah since 1988, ministering and discipling students as representatives for The Coalition for Christian Outreach, a campus ministry organization out of Pittsburgh established in the early 1970s.

The idea for Issachar's Loft came about when Miriam Sailors and others in the Student Life Office discussed the needs of students at Messiah. As Doug

said, they wanted to create a "safe environment" where students could feel free to "take off their masks" and "address issues of life in general—to find out what it's all about." More importantly, by addressing issues relevant to the lives of students and the world as well, this ministry seeks to develop leadership characteristics in the students to prepare them to stand strong in the world as Christians and "reclaim the earth for the Lord."

The name comes from 1 Chronicles 12:32, which refers to "the men of Issachar, [a tribe of Israel], who understood the times and knew what Israel should do." This verse exemplifies the goal for Issachar's Loft—that the students involved can learn to make sense of this world and be prepared to lead it down the right path. The Loft proper is in the attic of the Bradbury's house, outfitted with couches and chairs.

Part of Issachar's Loft involves the training of a leadership core group, composed of students who have committed themselves to taking an active role in fulfilling the ministry's vision. While Doug anticipates the process of getting everything put together taking about three to

five years, there are events that will be taking place this year. There will be a weekly Bible study and "fireside chats," where a public speaker will address a certain topic, plus a rock rappelling trip, which would include a training course, as well as several service-oriented voyages—all available to anyone who wishes to participate.

Doug's ultimate hope for the future of Issachar's Loft is to "develop Christians who are thinking about how they are living every area of their life . . . who have a big picture . . . who think Christianity is not what you do but who you are. We don't have the answers, but we want to help find answers."

Messiah granted approval for service/learning program

Messiah College recently received official notification of the awarding of two grants in support of the college's service/learning initiatives. The awards—a \$34,000 grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) and a \$3,000 mini-grant from the Pennsylvania Campus Compact of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities—provide for the appointment of a Director of Service/Learning, and the development of a six-hour service/learning course. The awards mark the first grant to the college by either funding agency.

Volunteer service is a longstanding tradition at Messiah College. To build on that tradition school officials felt that linking service and learning in a formal classroom setting would improve the quality of service provided by student volunteers, and enhance the learning value of the service activities. Officials also wanted to make sure that the lack of money would not limit service opportunities for all students.

Donna Dentler, Director of Career Development and Field Studies and project director for the FIPSE and Campus Compact grants, says, "The grant will allow us to develop a comprehensive service/learning program as well as to implement a unique service/learning course sequence." She adds, "Our goal is to incorporate service into the Messiah College curriculum and to better coordinate the numerous service activities which are already taking place."

There are three major components to the grants. The first called for a detailed design of a two-course sequence. The sequence consists of a three-credit course in the spring semester, involving students



Common Bond, one of three Messiah College music ministry teams bringing inspirational singing to churches across Pennsylvania and surrounding states this fall. Along with Common Bond, the other teams—Spirit Sound and New Song—present programs of popular Christian music by such artists as Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant, and Sandi Patti, while mixing in words of personal testimony with their singing. The audience often gets involved in sing-a-longs led by the group.

For booking information on a music ministry team write or call the Admissions office at Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027, (717) 691-6000.

President Hostetter announces retirement

Messiah College president D. Ray Hostetter announced his plans to retire at the end of the 1993-1994 academic year to the college's Board of Trustees during their October 18 meeting.

Dr. Hostetter has served as head of the college since 1964, making his the longest tenure of any currently serving Middle States college or university CEO. His retirement will mark the end of his 30th year.

Board chairman Galen Oakes has announced a two-step approach to select President Hostetter's successor. An ad hoc committee has been named to determine the college's future leadership requirements in relation to its strategic plan, and develop a leadership profile to be used in a presidential search. The actual search will follow, with a goal of having a new president in place at the beginning of the 1994-1995 academic year.

More information will appear in a later issue of the *Visitor*.

who will pursue a variety of summer service projects, followed by a three-credit, debriefing course in the fall with the same students. This model was developed primarily by Dr. Linda Parkyn, Assistant Professor of Spanish. The second major component provides for employment of a Director of Service/Learning Programs.

The third major component is provision for financial assistance for each student who enrolls in the six-credit service/learning course sequence. This will partially offset the money students could otherwise earn when they commit themselves to voluntary, non-paying service projects in the summer between the two halves of the course sequence.

Messiah's record for involving students in community service activities is notable. In recent years, the number of Messiah students volunteering in the community has approached one-quarter of the total enrolled. Messiah's Board of Trustees and administration are prepared to maintain the commitment to service

beyond the FIPSE grant period. The goal of the college, as stated in the most recent long-range plan, is that 80 percent of all Messiah students be involved in an educationally-related service project during their undergraduate years.

1991-1992 enrollment

The college's enrollment stands at 2,259, a slight increase from the 1990-1991 academic year. Recruitment efforts resulted in 560 freshmen enrolling; 114 transfers students enrolled as well. The class of 1995 comes from 27 states and 13 foreign countries.

Art exhibition of calligraphic word pictures of Handel's "Messiah" to open

The Aughinbaugh Gallery at Messiah College will have an exhibition by nationally known calligrapher Timothy R. Botts on display at the gallery from November 1 through December 6. The

exhibition by Botts, who has published several books demonstrating his subject matter, will show word pictures of Handel's "Messiah."

Timothy Botts mastered graphic design under Arnold Bank, one of the renowned instigators of the renewed interest nationwide in the art of calligraphy, and is himself one of the leading teachers and exhibitors of calligraphy in the country. Five of his previous works have been commended for their artistic craft and design by the Chicago Book Clinic. In "Messiah," Botts presents a multi-colored calligraphic treatment of the entirety of the lyrics of George Frederick Handel's majestic oratorio. The experience of reading the lyrics is thus greatly enhanced by the visual experience of Botts' beautiful renderings.

Located in Climenhaga Fine Arts Center, Aughinbaugh Art Gallery hours are 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday; 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Friday; and 2:00-5:00 p.m., Saturday-Sunday.

Attention youth group leaders

Youth groups will be given the opportunity to visit the beautiful Messiah College campus in Grantham to attend one of two basketball games as the college's guests:

Saturday, January 18, 1992, vs.

Susquehanna University

Saturday, February 8, 1992, vs.

Drew University

If you or your youth group would like to experience NCAA action at Messiah College, please contact Paul Morgan, Associate Director of Admissions, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027, (717) 691-6000. ■

MHS mental health scholarships available

Scholarships are available for college or graduate students pursuing careers in mental health fields from Mennonite Health Services and the MCC Canada Mental Health Program.

The scholarships, to be awarded in the spring for the 1992-1993 academic year, are available from the Elmer Ediger Memorial Scholarship Fund. Elmer Ediger was one of the founders of MHS and director of Prairie View Inc., in Newton, Kan., from 1957 until his death in 1983.

The fund, administered by a four-per-

son committee from Canada and the United States, helps people get the training they need to serve people who are mentally ill and developmentally disabled.

The scholarships will be between \$1,000 and \$1,200 and are available to students studying in Canada or the United States. Six or seven students receive scholarships yearly.

To qualify for the scholarships, candidates must be graduate students or in their final two years of undergraduate work, with a declared major and vocational interest in mental health, developmental disabilities, or related fields. Those who apply should have at least a 3.25 college grade average (4.0 scale).

Other factors considered are service experience; active membership in a Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, or Church of the Brethren congregation; attendance at a church-related college; and financial need.

Applications and all supporting data for the scholarships must be received by February 1, 1992. MHS will announce the winners April 30, 1992.

To apply in the United States write to Mennonite Health Services, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. In Canada write to MCC Canada Mental Health Program, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg MB R3T 5K9. ■

... on the topic of peace

From reading the reports of the 1990 General Conference, I understand there will be a revised position paper on peace presented at the 1992 session. Since the last General Conference the conflict in the Middle East has caused a lot of people to form and express their opinions about war and participation therein. This is true in secular publications as well as our own church paper. Many letters and articles have been written by people, many of whom, including myself, are well beyond the age to be called upon to serve. However, the June letter from Walter Winger and John Stoner's response in August inspired me to write.

The authors of this position paper must realize they are not just dealing with fading memories of the glory and horror of World War II, the nearly forgotten Korean War or the messy, unpopular Vietnam conflict. To not support Desert Storm with the yellow ribbons, banners, and T-shirts did not mean you opposed the futility and devastation of war. It was rather interpreted to mean you did not support the troops—our own friends and neighbors.

Contributions invited for *Dialogue* and *Readers Respond*

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Each article or letter represents the view of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policy of the Brethren in Christ Church or this periodical.

From my precarious perch upon the fence of indecision, I would like to toss out an idea which may help us get beyond debating and hoping for a unanimous agreement about the rightness or evils of war. That just won't happen. Intellectual purists may want to go to the next article because I made this observation while helping in the church nursery. To pass the time and entertain the children, I like to see how high I can stack blocks. Some of the children like to help and we sometimes create impressive structures. But there is always at least one child who delights in knocking these blocks down, completely ignoring the time and effort it took to build them. This destruction can be wrought in a fraction of the time it took to build, and by only one child.

Could this analogy apply to the city and citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the cathedrals destroyed and people killed in Europe, or the historical landmarks and people in Baghdad? It simply takes a lot more people to build and clean up than to destroy. Is it cowardly to choose not to take part in the destruction?

I think we need go beyond the endless debate of the morality of war and accept the fact that we will always live with the threat. Our question then is, Do we want to identify with the destructive or constructive forces, and how do we demonstrate that choice? I recall a picture on TV of a soldier with a gun over his shoulder passing out blankets to the Kurds. An MCC worker would have used the money from the gun and uniform to buy more food and blankets. But the Kurd had the blanket that cold night. *No easy answers!*

Ed Meyer
Bremen, Ind.

... on the topic of the devotional head covering for women

After much pondering and prayer, I feel constrained as a woman to respond to the article in the July issue of the *Visitor*, "Let My Women Free."

Personally I have never felt in bondage or been tempted to lay aside the prayer veiling, which I have worn for 55 years now. Rather I have received much blessing in walking and living in obedi-

ence to God's Word. The Lord has used this numbers of times in our travels to make an opening to witness for Him, in a real meaningful way. On one occasion a Catholic young man, working in a restaurant, questioned us. We had a precious time talking to him about God's Word. I also feel it is a real protection for a Christian girl or woman.

I am amazed after reading 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 in eight different translations how clear each one is on this portion of Scripture. I am also amazed that just two chapters beyond this, which is written to the same people, I have never once heard anyone try to discard or change. I am wondering what we would have remaining in our Bible if anyone who doesn't like or understand certain Scriptures would say it doesn't apply to us today. In the past we used the Greek to strengthen our position. Now it seems we are using the Greek to weaken it.

If I understand God's Word correctly, when we stand before the Lord at the Judgment, we will give answer to what the Word says, not what we wanted it to say.

My prayer has been, "Lord, help our beloved brotherhood to stay by the Word of God, with all diligence, lest we let it slip from us."

May I add, I am so thankful and happy that God made me a woman. I have no problem in being submissive to God or my husband. I want to honor and obey Him in everything that makes for godly living.

Praise God I am free!

Mrs. Mark E. Slagenweit, Sr.
Martinsburg, Pa.

First Corinthians 11:1-16 has been a sore spot for a lot of people for a lot of years, and we suppose it will continue to be so as long as we live in fallen temples of clay. It is surpassed only by the contention over the doctrine of entire sanctification. When one hears and reads of all the "new" doctrine or discoveries, you have to ask, "Did our fathers know the truth about so many controversial things?" An article in a magazine stated that the publishers of the red-letter edition of the Bible should redo the Gospel of Mark and include only one verse in red. Were the founders of the Brethren in

Christ wrong in their understanding of 1 Corinthians? Were the founders of most all other major denominations wrong in their early belief and practice of 1 Corinthians? (We have seen old pictures of other denominations and they looked very Brethren in Christ.) If we continue to "undo" the light of our founding fathers we may find ourselves claiming that the blood is not needed for our redemption—as a number have done already. As Jude instructs us to "earnestly contend for the faith," so we feel compelled to do so in the following.

First Corinthians was written *not to just* the Corinthian believers, but to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:2c KJV). Paul also taught the same things written in all the other churches and God saw to it that he acknowledged that fact in one of his epistles—1 Cor. 4:17. Paul also told the people at Corinth that if they claimed to be "spiritual" to also acknowledge that what he taught (including 1 Cor. 11:1-16) were "the *commandments* of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

In 1 Corinthians 11:16 Paul speaks about those who seem to be contentious (the word used here means those who like to argue or cause strife) and that he has no such custom and neither do the churches of God. To imply that Paul went into

detail about an ordinance and then told those who like to argue that there was no such ordinance practiced would be the same as telling those who do not agree on having an experience with God in purifying our hearts by faith that there is no such teaching that we or the Bible or the church teaches and accepts. Paul, in verse 16, is speaking to men—the word used for man is *aner* which means the male gender. "[It] is never used of the female sex; it stands in distinction from a woman" (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, V. III, p. 34). Paul has earlier in the epistle addressed the issue of contentions in the church (1 Cor. 1:11). He also instructed Titus to "Avoid. . . contentions. . ." (Titus 3:9). Since he was addressing men in particular and has already spoken about contentions, he was not giving them liberty to ignore the teachings he just gave, but was telling them that being contentious is not for Christians nor the church of God. If by some chance he was addressing the issue to cover or not cover, since he was speaking to men about contention, the issue would not have been a veiled head for women, but an "unveiled" head for men or the length of hair on men. Both would have been an issue for the men—for the Jews the uncovered head—and for the Corinthians long hair (as many of

them would've had prior to their acceptance of Christ).

The fact that Paul used two separate words in referring to "cover," "covering," "covered" tells us that he was speaking about two separate articles. In verses 5 through 7 he uses the word *katakalypto* when referring to covering the head—which means to be "veiled" or "covered." In verse 13 he uses *akatakalypto* which means to "unveil." However, in verse 15 he uses the word *peribolaion* when referring to the hair as a "covering." The word means to throw around, i.e. as a "mantle" (Vine, p. 252). The culture of this time period was that all women wore a shaw-type veil. Married women would also veil their faces as an indication of their married status. Paul is saying that the hair replaces that shaw-type garment that was used, but prior to this he instructed that all women should have "authority" on their heads which was different from the shaw-type garment as indicated by his use of a different word as mentioned above.

Paul, at the beginning of the epistle, has already stated that he taught the same things in all the churches, but is there any historical evidence that the ordinance of the prayer veiling was taught or observed elsewhere other than at Corinth or the Middle East? Tertullian says: "In fact to

(continued on page 30)

The Way of Peace

A column for Christian peacemakers

The Board for Brotherhood Concerns met for its fall meeting immediately following the consultation of general church boards at Kenbrook Bible Camp in early October. Following are some highlights of that meeting:

The BBC role in implementing denominational priorities: The two denominational goals of evangelism and discipleship are at the heart of the BBC agenda. The board discussed various ways to help pastors and congregations include concerns for reconciliation, peace, service, and justice in their plans for evangelism and discipleship.

Peace education: Knowing that it is important but not enough to teach peace to adults, the board talked about how to teach peace to children and youth. One idea which generated spirited discussion and excitement about its possibilities was

the suggestion that our church camps (Kenbrook, Camp Lakeview, Mile High Pines, Camp Kaquah, Christian Retreat Center, Roxbury, Memorial Holiness, and Niagara) include some sort of peace education as part of their programming for children and youth.

World Hunger Fund: After a number of years of operating by some unwritten (but generally understood) assumptions and principles, the board formalized and adopted a set of guidelines for the distribution of World Hunger Funds to needy people and places around the world.

Urban ministries: The board looks forward to hosting a small urban retreat for key Brethren in Christ urban leaders in February 1992 in New York City, and to sponsoring the 1992 pre-General Conference event, "Bridge to the City," in July in Hamilton, Ontario.

Statement on the Use of Military Force: The BBC discussed and affirmed a revised statement, responding to the 1990 General Conference directive for further study. This revised version of the "Statement on Militarism" approaches the issue a bit differently than before. We invite inquiries as well as input into the shaping of the statement which will be presented to the 1992 conference.

A lot of energy, vision, and commitment is represented in the Board for Brotherhood Concerns. Discussion was lively and there was not unanimity on every issue, but each person cares deeply about doing God's work in the world. We invite your participation!

The Way of Peace column is a project of the Board for Brotherhood Concerns.

this day the Corinthians veil their virgins. What the apostle taught, their disciples approved. . . . There are places, too, beneath this sky (Carthage, Africa) where their practice is attained, lest any subscribe this custom to Greek or barbarious Gentilehood" (quoted by Vine, V. IV, p. 28). We live so many years beyond the days of the apostles that we wonder about their teachings and practices. Since those we quote lived in the second and third centuries, they would have a closer advantage over us in these areas.

Many of those that are quoted as historical records would have had direct

contact with travelling companions or associates of the apostles and therefore would have greater insight into what the teaching was meaning for Christians in the outward practice. Tertullian as quoted above mentioned that it was a teaching of the apostles and practiced by all churches everywhere, not just in the Middle East and not just a custom of a certain race of people. Augustine (354-430 A.D.), Hippolytus (170-236 A.D.), Jerome (331-430 A.D.), and Clement of Alexandria (150-220 A.D.) also support such a statement. All claim that this is an ordinance of God. This ordinance was in churches

of different cultures and languages and all their leaders claim that it is taught by God's word.

The problem today is not one of light but our outward practice of what God's word tells us. This is not the only area where we fail to practice our theology, but one of a number. God's blessing will be so sweetly upon us and with us as we are "doers" of His word and not hearers only.

John and Sue Geyer
Everett, Pa.

Phoebe's Journal

Hearing the voices of women

I'm still thinking about issues of authority and leadership. When I first read Ken Letner's article on leadership ("Responding to Leadership," May 1991), I was uncomfortable with what I felt were the implications behind some of the questions he raised. The message from a number of quarters these days, including that article, is that we should just "trust our leaders." When I hear that, I instinctively react negatively, and I often worry that my negative reaction is indeed because of the things Ken talked about—stubbornness, resistance to accountability, etc. I am then further frustrated when this issue is spiritualized—i.e., when we are reminded that God chose our leaders and that leadership is part of God's plan. I don't doubt that, but I also believe that putting it in those terms tends to equate questioning leadership with questioning God, which is often unfair to those who question.

I've recently gained some additional insight into why I react as I do on these questions of authority and leadership. How can I trust leadership when I feel as a woman that I am not included? This is a more fundamental issue than whether I'm on a board which helps to shape the decision-making process. The reality is that women are not integrally involved in setting the agenda, asking the questions, or framing the issues; our world view is not generally part of the discussion and when we do raise questions,

we're often not heard. The top leadership of the church is all male, most pastors and board members are male, and I can't think of a single female theologian in the Brethren in Christ Church. Some women "dabble" in theology, and a few have seminary training, but we're not actively "doing theology." While there is lip service to equality, the truth is that men are in charge. I write this in some trepidation because I know I will make people angry. For example, the person who responded to Phoebe in the September *Visitor* was clearly upset by something I said which she interpreted as lack of respect for leadership. She may well be upset with me again. I can handle such attacks, but they still hurt, especially when I feel like the person making the attack doesn't understand what I am really trying to say or assumes things about me that aren't true.

I know that many men in the church are well-meaning; many of them are genuinely and openly supportive of women, and work at trying to involve women at all levels of church life. I also know that some women will feel as threatened by what I say as some men will; women often assert in all honesty that they want or are willing to trust male leadership. I don't want to make people angry, but I

suspect that's an inevitable result of raising untraditional questions.

Can we learn to really listen to each other? Can men hear the stories of women; can they hold the anger and pain that some women in the church have felt and continue to feel because our issues and world view and framework are not an integral part of the discussion? Can we look at the Bible through the eyes of women? Can other women accept that we don't all view things the same way? Can we respect one another's diversity of perspective and emotion? Who is mentoring young women and encouraging them to choose theology as a field of study? And when they have studied theology (perhaps from a feminine perspective), will there be room in the church for them?

I was recently in a meeting where Christian women were saying some pretty radical things which resonated with the way I have felt many times. But even as I listened, I couldn't help wondering what would have happened if Brethren in Christ men (and some women) had been there. I fear that the women I was listening to would have been summarily written off as angry and hysterical women on the fringe rather than accepted as worthy partners in the search for the truth of the gospel. I guess what I'm asking for is that we not write people off because they question leadership or hold divergent views, but that we work intentionally at listening to a variety of perspectives. For myself I ask that, but I also ask on behalf of many other women I know whose voices are not being heard.

Phoebe

Readers may correspond with both Phoebe and Onesimus by writing to them c/o the Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Napanee, IN 46550.

Onesimus

Dear Paul,

Where I live it's Thanksgiving time. Now before you get all excited (as you're prone to do) and dash off a letter congratulating us on our deep spirituality and gratitude attitude, I'd better explain what that means . . . and doesn't mean.

In our area of the world Thanksgiving's an annual event. While its origin lies more in national history and politics than biblical precedent, the intent is nevertheless a worthy one: to set apart a season to express thanks to God for his many spiritual and temporal blessings.

Sadly, Thanksgiving has become more holiday than holy day. Almost everyone gets a day (or more) off from work. Folks gather with family and friends. They eat lots of food and watch lots of football on television and shop for lots of Christmas gifts and—none of this is making much sense to you, is it?

Anyway, I'm ashamed to tell you that during the holiday we call Thanksgiving, the one thing many people are least likely to do is give thanks. How did you put it in one of your letters? "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." That description fits us to a tee.

I won't clutter your busy mind with more details of our sorry spiritual and moral state here—you have enough problems, what with persecution, prison, pain, and problem congregations. Instead I write to do a little thanksgiving of my own. What I'm particularly thankful for right now, Paul, is you, and I didn't figure it would do you any harm to hear me tell you that.

You don't mind, do you, if I put pen to parchment to tell you how much I appreciate you:

Dedication—From the moment Christ bowled you over on the Damascus road, leaving you lying there with a gleam in your eye and dust in your mouth, your thirst for God has been unquenchable. Nothing else than passionate 24-carat love could have spun you around so completely and caused you to endure all you've encountered without flinching or falling away. That reminds me to give thanks for you

Suffering—Beatings, stonings, prisons, loneliness, rejection, slander, illness are some of the "marks of the Lord Jesus" you wear in your body. Anyone can feel like a winner when the race is going his or her way. Your example teaches me to laugh in the devil's face and kick up my heels with joy even when it seems the bottom has fallen out of God's promises. And that brings me to you

Honesty—As much as your "Rejoice in the Lord always" and "We are knocked down but not knocked out" have encouraged me, I think I've been helped more, dear friend, by your admissions of weakness and failure.

When you admit to the arrogant Corinthians, of all people, that you "were under great pressure far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life," and you confide to the Romans that "What I want to do I do not do. . . . What a wretched man I am!" I find in those words someone who understands my own battles with discouragement and darkness. That leads me to praise God also for you

Unselfish love—How quick you are to pour praise on people, even the ordinary and the ornery. That willingness to put yourself in someone else's shoes, to "spend and be spent" for others, to build people up at your own expense shows your teachings on the mind of Christ are experience and not just theory. Speaking of Christ's mind, I'm also thankful for you

Wisdom and intelligence—Your sharp intellect and shrewd understanding have cut a wide swath through error and evil, clearing a path to God throughout the empire. Your writings, inspired by the Spirit, will endure and enrich the world for centuries to come (I'm not exactly a prophet, Paul, but trust me on this one). And as I think of the future I'm particularly grateful for you

Hope—You've lived your life as though it were just a fascinating introduction to a much bigger and better drama to come. When you say that "to live is Christ and to die is gain" I know you mean it. When I hear you almost giggling on your way to the grave because of the great "Secret" you know, I'm emboldened to face my own life—and death—with the same fearless optimism.

"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me," you have said. If that is the case, then thanks be to Christ for shining through the window of your life with such brilliance and warmth.

And thanks, Paul, for being the window.

Your grateful admirer,
Onesimus

Pontius Puddle

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To lead or not to lead?

by R. Donald Shafer

Recently a friend was talking to me about the rather sad trend in our North American culture toward disparaging our leadership. He was really disappointed to discern that it is not only in the secular market but also observable in church life.

Certainly we have all been appalled at the moral failure of several well-known religious leaders and some recognized evangelical church leaders. This is a sad state indeed.

The United States has been rocked by the scandal of persons, under oath, saying the exact opposite of each other. Of course, the whole concept of victimization is immediately put into the category of a potential victimizer.

Surely no one would argue for trust that is blind or for leaders who are not accountable. This is ridiculous! Indeed the downfall of any person is often due to misplaced trust and lack

of clear accountability. It may well be that our culture is so individualized and self-centered that we are moving toward anarchy and paralysis of doing things decently and in order.

The Bible has some rather strong exhortations regarding relationships and attitudes about leaders. The passages in Hebrews 13:7-19 and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14 indicate that there is to be an expectation that leaders are spiritually disciplined, hard workers, and committed to prayer and a life of integrity. This is to be balanced by the respect and loving trust of their co-laborers.

It has been interesting to find that very few persons will disagree that in our present situation in North America (perhaps in the world today), it is not easy to lead.

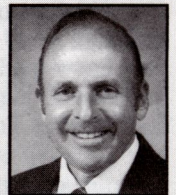
What is rather frightening are the signs of anarchy such as the increasing violence in homes and by gangs on the streets. It would be an easy step to call for a violent control by law enforcement persons, and we know some of them have already been tempted to succumb to that temptation.

Thus as a culture, we are possibly on the verge of further disintegration of the social order and a reliance on violence to stop the chaos. But both history and Scripture bear witness to the truth that violence only begets more violence.

There is a higher hope and a better way. Jesus calls us over the tumult to love and respect one another. The

Christian community has an opportunity to model how we can handle conflict and still be examples of the believers in the way Jesus walked. Can we mutually and intentionally call one another to trust and accountability? I believe we can and should. This is an invitation, even a call, for all of us in the company of those committed to Christ to share with the world a model of God's people who creatively exhibit how we can lead by loving one another rather than succumbing to the pitfalls of our culture. To lead or not to lead? The better question for leaders and followers is: To love or not to love? That is the question!

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